A PATERN OF FREE GRACE;

OR,

The exceeding Riches of the Free Grace and Mercy of God in Christ, to Believing and Repenting Sinners.

By the example of that admirable Convert, or rather miraculous mirror of Gods wonderful Love and Mercy, in saving the Repenting Thief on the Cross.

Wherein is excellently handled the Doctrine of true Repentance; the exceeding Sinfulness of Sin; with the desperate danger of final Impenitency; with the certainty of Salvation to repenting Sinners by Christ.

By that Godly and Faithfull Servant of Christ and his Church, *Samuel Smith*, Minister of the Gospel, and Author of *The Great Assize*, and *Davids Repentance*.

Rom. 9. 18. *He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy; and whom he will he hardneth.*

London, Printed for *John Andrews*, at the White Lion near *Pye-Corner*, 1658.

Courteous Reader,

BE pleased to take notice that there are five other godly Treatises extant of this pious Authors: viz. *The Great Assize. Davids Repentance. Davids blessed Man. Moses Prayer.* And *The Practice of Godliness, The Christian duty.*

An excellent Book likewise called *The Silver Watch-bell.*

Also a most pious and comfortable Treatise, entituled; *The Everlasting Joyes of Heaven*, or, *The blessed Life of a Christian in Grace here, and in Glory hereafter*: very seasonable for these times.

Also an excellent Sermon, called *Christs first Sermon*, or, *the Necessity, Duty, and Practice of Repentance*, opened and applied: a very godly Book, and is but three pence price.

There are likewise seven other small Books, all of them very godly, and very comfortable for thy soul. One is entituled, *The Charitable*

Christian. Another, *The Plain Mans Path-way to Heaven, directing every one how they may be* The third, *The Devils disease*; or, *the sin of Pride arraigned and condemned.* The fourth, *The dreadful Character of a Drunkard.* The fifth, *The Black Book of Conscience*: or, *Gods High Court of Justice in the Soul.* The sixth, *The Fathers last Blessing.* The seventh, *Dooms-day at hand.* All very necessary for these licentious times. Each of them being but of two pence price: and are to be sold by *John Andrews*, at the White Lion near *Pye-Corner.*

THE ADMIRABLE CONVERT.

Luk. 23. verſ. 39. 40. &c.

ANd one of the evill doers, which were hanged, railed on him, ſaying, If thou bee Chriſt, ſaue thy ſelf & vs. But the other anſwering rebuked him, ſaying, Doeſt thou not feare God, ſeeing thou art in the ſame

same condemnation?

We indeed are iustly here, for we receiue the due reward of our deeds, but this man hath done nothing amisse.

And he said vnto Iesus, Lord remember me when thou comest into thy kingdome.

And Iesus said vnto him, Verily I say vnto thee, to day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.

OF all Doctrines to be preached, none more necessarie then the Doctrine of true *Repentance*, which as it is most necessarie to life and saluation, as our Sauiour witnesseth, saying, *Except ye repent, ye shall all perish*; So neuer more neglected, then in these times, wherein too many of Israels *Watchmen* bend themselues, not to serue to the edifica-

Luk. 13. 5.

tion of the faith of the Church, as to disturbe the peace thereof, wherein the malice and policie of Sathan, in the pureſt Churches, to corrupt the purity of doctrine, hath beene euer ſeene.

But to leaue ſuch as wearie themſelues and Hearers with knotty queſtions, tending rather to ſtrife then edification, therein many times to get a name of profunditie, they leade their people rather into a labyrinth, then work them to true piety.

It is the Doctrine of true repentance we haue now in hand, and herein of that *Admirable Conuert*, or that *Mirror of Gods mercy*, the *Thiefe* on the *Croſſe*, whoſe example as it is full of conſolation vnto the godly, ſo no one example of Gods mercy in the whole Scripture more abuſed by wicked and licentious men.

Before we come to these particulars, it will not be amisse that we first cast our eyes vpon the Lord *Iesus Christ* himselfe, who as the Prophet *Isaiah* saith, *was numbred with transgressours.*

Isa. 53. 12.

And as Saint *Luke* obserueth in this Chapter:

Vers. 32. *There were also two other malefactours led with him to be put to death.*

Verse 33. *And when they were come to the place which is called Caluary, there they crucified him, and the Malefactours, &c.*

The foure kindes of death in vse among the Iewes.

There were foure kindes of death in vse amongst the Iewes, as capitall punishments for capitall offences.

I Stoning, Leuit. 24. 14. Deut. 17. 7.

First, *stoning*, a kinde of death commonly inflicted vpon *Blasphemers*, and Idolaters, where the hand of the witnesse was first to be vpon him.

Second-

Secondly, *Beheading.*

Thirdly, *Burning:*

Fourthly, *Strangling*, which punishment was afterwards changed by the *Romans* into *crucifying*; which kinde of death was aboue the rest full of *paine, ignominie*, and *reproach*; and therefore reserued for *grand* Malefactours. The manner whereof was this: The body was to hang on the tree till night, and before the Sunne was set, the same was to be taken downe and buried. This kinde of death was branded with a curse by God himselfe: *He that is hanged, is accursed of God.*

And for the nature of this kind of death, without all question it was performed with much torture and paine, the Armes being stretched out, and fastened vnto the tree, with nayles which pierced both hands and feet; in which

2 Beheading

3 Burning. Deu. 21. 22

4 Crucifying Deu. 21. 23

miserable torture and paine, the *crucified* was to remain and abide till death.

And if it should be inquired why the Iewes did so earnestly vrge *Pilate* that Christ might be *crucified*, no question it was done (in respect of them) because this kind of death was the most ignominious, bitter, and reproachfull, such was their malice against Christ.

And herein something would be obserued concerning

1. The *Iewes inflicting*.
2. *Christ suffering*
3. The nature of the death, *crucifying*.

Doct. 1. The malice of the wicked great against Christ and his members.

First of all, in these Iewes we may take notice of the implacable rage and malice that is in wicked and vngodly men against Christ and his members. No wilde beast is more sauage and cruell

cruell then wicked men are, yea and that against the most innocent. Here is Christ Iesus himselfe, the *Obiect*, *Abiect*, and *Subiect*, of the malice of mercilesse men, who thought they could neuer shew cruelty enough vpon Christ.

Of them it may truly be said, *Destruction and calamitie are in their wayes, and the way of peace they haue not knowne.*

And hence is it that in the Scripture, wicked men are resembled vnto *Lions*, *Beares*, *Wolues*, *Foxes*, and *Beasts*, yea such kind of beasts as are of a cruell and deuouring nature: yea as *Solomon* saith, The very *mercies* of the wicked are *cruell*. What a greeting was there betwixt *Elisha* and *Hazael*; the very sight of *Hazael* caused the man of God to weepe, foreseeing the cruelty that he would exercise

Mat.7.15. Cant. 2. 2.The.3.2. Pro.12.10 2.King.8. 11.

vpon the people of Israel: *their young men* (saith he) *wilt thou slay with the sword, and rip vp the mothers with childe, and dash their children against the stones.* Exod. 2. Mat. 2. We may see this in *Pharao*, in *Herod*, in *Haman*, who regarded none, neither age nor sexe: besides the woefull experience of the truth hereof, the godly daily finde in the world.

Reas. 1. Neither is this a thing to be wondred at; for consider by what spirit such are led, not by the Spirit of God, which is the spirit of *peace* and of *loue*: But by the spirit of Sathan, who is full of malice, and hunteth still after blood, going about continually seeking whom he may deuoure; who is compared in the Scripture to a *Lion, Dragon*, and *old Serpent*, and a Murtherer from the beginning. Now it is Sathan himselfe 1. Pet. 5. 8. Reu. 12.

that

that worketh in the wicked, he bloweth the coles, and wicked men are but his Instruments to serue his turne.

As also in respect of the Godly themselues, because they run not with the wicked into the same excesse of riot. *Whosoeuer refraineth from euill, maketh himselfe a prey.* The very piety and holinesse of life, that is to be seene in the Godly, is matter for the malice of wicked men to worke vpon, this bred the quarrel betwixt *Cain* and his Brother; *Abel* was more righteous then himself, this stirred vp *Cain* against him.

Reas. 2. Esay. 59. 15 1 Ioh. 3. 12

Vse 1.

Seing then that there is such an implacable hatred in the wicked against the Righteous; Neuer let vs wonder then at the Churches misery, nor the godlys afflictions, for haue they not many and mighty enimies that plot and

and conſpire againſt them. Was not this foretold in the firſt age of the world, Gen.3.15. *I will put enmitie betweene thee and the woman, and betweene thy ſeede and her ſeede?* And was not this againe confirmed by Chriſt himſelfe, now in the laſt age of the world; Mat.10.34 *I came not to ſend peace, but the Sword? I am come to ſet a man at variance againſt his Father, and the Daughter againſt the Mother, &c.* Neuer then let vs wonder at it, but rather magnifie the goodneſſe of our God, that is pleaſed thus to limit, and bound the malice of the wicked, without whoſe ſpeciall prouidence we could not liue amongſt them.

Vſe 2. And indeed it ſhould teach vs to be wiſe as Serpents, conſidering that wee liue amongſt, and haue to doe with ſuch ſubtil and malitious enemies. Vpon this very

ry ground our Sauiour warneth thus, *Behold, I send you forth as Lambs amongst Wolues, bee ye therefore wise as Serpents, and innocent as Doues.* Mat. 10. 16 Wisdom and Simplicitie is required of all Gods people. We are to walke warily euery where, and looke well vnto our selues that we be not made a prey vnto them.

Vse 3. And because our enemies are deepe in Councell, prudent in their enterprises, wary in their proceedings, politique in preuenting, and suddaine in the execution of their designes; It shall be our wisdom to fly still vnto God, and by earnest prayer desire him to deliuer vs from *wicked and vnreasonable men.* 2 Thes. 3. 2 All our hope and confidence must be in him, and let vs pray with *David,* that the Lord would rather take vs into his owne hand to 2 Sam. 24. 13. 14.

cor-

correct vs, and not suffer vs to fall into the hands of men, for with him there is mercy. *He remembreth whereof we be made, he considereth that wee are but dust.* Ps. 103. 14

And indeed in this hath the Lord heard and answered his people, that howsoeuer for our sins we haue tasted of the Lords Rod, by Famine, Pestilence, strange diseases, vnseasonable weather, &c. Yet the Lord hath not made vs a prey to malitious and wicked men, whose very mercies are cruel, and whose insatiable thirst, is for the blood of the Saints, which if the Lord should doe at any time, which wee may iustly feare by reason of our sins, wee shall then be brought to see a manifest difference betwixt the chastisments of a mercifull God and louing Father, and the bloody cruelties of mercilesse men. Hi-

therto

therto of the malice of the Iewes.

For the second, Christ an Innocent suffereth here as a Nocent, and dyeth with two grand Malefactors, and that a *shamefull, ignominious*, and *reprochfull* Death. Note we hence.

That it may be the portion of faithfull men, yea the best Christians to suffer as Malefactors, heere is Christ *Numbred with Transgressors*, crucified with two Theeues. So is *Micha* sent to the prison, *Ieremy* to the Dungeon, *Daniel* to the den, *Ioseph* punished as an Adulterer, *Paul* imprisoned for preaching the Gospel, and the *Baptist* beheaded, yea the better the Christian, the more obnoxious and liable to wrongs, & it must needs be so.

First, in regard of that implacable rage and malice that the wicked beare against the Godly.

2

Doct. 2 Godly men many times suffer as malefactors.

1 Reg. 22. 27. Ier. 32. 2. Gen. 39. 2 Tim. 1. 16.

Mar. 6. 27.

Reas. 1.

For

For it was through the enuie of the people that Christ was put to death, for they had no iust accusation against Christ; How often doth Christ cleare his innocency, *what euill haue I done?* and *which of you can reproue me of sin?*

Mat. 27. 18

Reas. 2.

Secondly, in the Iudgement of the men of the world the godly are esteemed naught, measuring others by themselues. Thus dealt they with Christ. *We haue found this man a pestilent Fellow, and an enemy to Cæsar.*

Luk. 23. 2.

Reas. 3.

But the maine ground hereof is this, because the life and conuersation of the Godly is no after the manner of the world, and their wise, their sober, and holy life seemes to vpbraid and condemne the euill practises of the world.

Vse 1.

Which serues first to condemne that Tenet of the Church of Rome,

Rome, who wil allow no Church but such a Church as is florishing and visible, and measure the truth of it, by the florishing light and reputation of Ecclesiasticall order, as if Christ hath changed his cognisance, the *Crosse* and the *taking vp of the Crosse*, to the Imperious lifting vp of the Scepter, or the *Crosier*, now more dreadfull then the Scepter.

Secondly, let this admonish vs to bee wary how wee censure others, seeing the most innocent haue suffered, neither by mens ends heere are wee to iudge of mens estates hereafter. Many say of the Godly in time of affliction, as the Iewes did of Christ, *He trusted in God let him deliuer him.* Let vs see what his religion and forwardnesse will now auaile him; But thus dealeth the Lord many times with the best Christian, *Vse 2.*

stian, whilest a wicked man is suffered to run on to destruction.

Vse 3. Thirdly, if thou be a Christian and beest falsly accused euen of most heinous crimes, or spitefully intreated with scoffs, and reproaches, esteemed malefactor, yea and suffer for the same, this may not be grieuous vnto vs, inasmuch as the same befell our Lord Iesus Christ himself in a worse measure and manner then they can befall vs. But we ought with much patience to possesse our Soules, for that our Brethren, and Master too, haue troade the same presse before vs.

And to this end consider further.

Motiues to suffer wrong. 1 First that heerein we shall bee but conformable vnto Christ our head, who suffered as an euildoer at the hands of the wicked.

2 Secondly, all the disgraces, reproches and outward miseries that

that can be layd vpon vs by the wicked, cannot take away our innocency, nor make vs vnhappy. *I will not part with my innocency vntill I dye*, saith Iob.

Thirdly, though wee doe not deserue such disgraces or reproches from men, yet the Lord is iust in his iudgements; and for some secret sin or other, may permit wicked men thus to reuile & abuse vs; for howsoeuer wee deserue them not with men, wee are not innocent before God. 3.

Thirdly, for the manner of his death, of all kinds of deaths, now in vse amongst the Iewes, this kind of death was most *shamefull*, *painefull*, and most *accursed*, to be *Crucified*. This kind of death was pronounced accursed by God himselfe. *He that is hanged is accursed of God*, and so saith the Apostle. *He was made a curse for vs.* 3. Deut. 21. 23. Gal. 3. 13.

Doct. 3. Christ died an accursed death.

Now Christ in the prouidence of God his Father was to dye this accursed death, this shamefull, painefull, and most ignominious death.

And heerein it is requisite that wee should not looke so much vpon the malice of the *Iewes*, of *Herod*, or of *Pilate*, of the high-Priest, or of the people, for these all were but the Lords Instruments, to serue his purpose and decree, as it is sayd, *Herod and Pontius Pilate with the Gentiles and people of Israel, were gathered together for to doe whatsoeuer thy hand and thy counsell determined before to be done.* Act. 4. 27. 28.

Quest. But why was Christ to dye this kind of death aboue all other?

Ans. There are many reasons wherefore Christ was thus to dye, and to suffer this kind of death.

1 First, it was the Decree and Coun-

Counsell of God that it should be so. Act.2.23.

Secondly, that heerein and heereby it might appeare that Christ was the true *Messiah*, and Sauiour that was promised of old, vnto the Fathers, for so saith Christ: *When ye haue lift vp the Son of Manthen shal ye know that I am he.* 2 Ioh.8.28.

Thirdly, that herein and heereby Christ might answere all those *Types* in the time of the Law, concerning Christ. As namely the *Heaue offering*, which was to be lifte vp and shaken from the right hand vnto the left, signifiing indeed the spreading abroad of Christs armes on the tree. 3 Leuit.10. 15. Leuit.7.30

And that of *Isaac* layd vpon the wood, with the brazen Serpent erected vpon a pole, all which were liuely *Types* and figures of Christ. Gen.22.10 Num.21.8

4. Fourthly, that all those seuerall prophecyes made before of the *Messiah* to come, might haue their period and determination in him. viz.

They pearced my hands and
Psal.22.17. *feete.* And againe,

They shall deliuer him vnto the Gentiles, and they shall mocke him, and scourge him, and crucifie him.

5. Fiftly, that those consequents of sin, shame, paine, and the curse, might through the sufferings of the Lord Iesus be taken away: as indeed they are vnto all true beleeuers through Christ.

Who hath borne our shame, suffering with two Malefactors.

Paine, being racked and disioynted Psal. 22. 14.

The curse, being hanged on a tree.

And thus indeed in all those respects it was expedient that

Christ

Christ should thus bee crucified, and suffer this kinde of death, *That the Scripture might be fulfilled, signifying what death hee should dye.* Io.18.32.

But especially it was most expedient that Christ should suffer this shamefull, ignominious, and cursed death, that so hee might beare the curse of the law, and the wrath of God for vs, that wee might bee made Heyres of the blessing: for so saith the Apostle, *He was made vnder the law, that hee might redeeme them which were vnder the law, that we might receiue the adoption of Sons.* 6. Gal.4.4. Gal.3.13.

Now this curse and malediction of the law hath Christ vndergone for vs, according to that prophecy of old: *He bare our infirmities, and carried our sins. He was wounded for our Transgressions, hee was broken for our ini-* Esay 53.4.

quities, he made his soule an offering for sin, the chastisment of our peace was vpon him.

And thus was Christ made vnder the law, the law deeming and reputing Christ the Transgressor, and inflicting vpon him both in soul and body, the whole curse and malediction of the law. And indeed the wrath of God for the sins of the world lay so heauy vpon him, as that it pierced his very soule: For had Christ suffered onely in body, then had he onely ouercome a bodily death, & then were our estate most miserable.

But our sinnes hauing deserued not onely a bodily death, but euen the second death, the death of body and soule, it was therefore necessarie that Christ should satisfie the wrath and Iustice of his Father for both.

And indeed whence was it that when

when that his bitter death approched, he began to be so sorrowfull and heauie? whence was it that he said vnto his disciples, *My soule is heauy*, &c. whence was it that he fell so often vpon his face and prayed, *Father, if it be possible let this cup passe from me?*

Whence was it that an Angell was faine to come from heauen to comfort him?

Whence was it that he prayed groueling his face to the earth, whē his sweat was drops of bloud trickling downe to the ground?

Whence, I say, was all this, but from those bitter pangs that he felt in his soule, his soule being made an offering for sinne?

But how could God be iust in punishing an innocent for the nocent? *Quest. 1.*

We must consider Christ in his sufferings, not as a debtor, but as a *Answ.*

surretie and a pledge betwixt God and vs, who had vndertaken for vs: Therefore he suffered not as guiltie in himselfe, but personating vs that were guiltie.

Now it stands with the course of Iustice to lay the debtors action vpon the Suretie, especially being willing and able to satisfie the same.

Quest.2. But Christs death was short, and but for a little time, and the sinnes of mankinde deserued an euerlasting punishment, how then could this finite death of Christ answer for such an infinite debt?

Answ. This proceeds from the dignitie and worth of the person that doth suffer, and that is the Lord Iesus Christ himselfe, in respect of his Humanitie, which was more then if all mankinde vnto the end of the world should haue suffered the wrath of God in Hell for euer. Seeing

Seeing then that Christ was thus to vndergo this accursed death, to free all the elect from the curse of the Law and death: This shewes first of all the miserie of euery wicked man, and impenitent sinner, that is not reconcled vnto God in Iesus Christ, that hath no part nor portion in Christs sufferings, against whom the Law is yet in force. To such an impenitent sinner do I speake, whatsoeuer Christ suffered here, in some sort rests for thee to suffer; thou that art a swearer, drunkard, prophane person, that liuest yet in thy naturall estate, and art not transformed into Christs death, and by faith made a member of Christ: Thou lyest yet in thy sinnes, art vnder the curse and malediction of the Law: Christ hath in no wise vndertaken for thee, but thou thy selfe must one day

Vse 1.

day beare the *shame*, *curse*, and *punishment* due for thy sinne: Oh the misery of euery impenitent sinner! were this duely considered, it would dampe all the present pleasures of the wicked, and set them on worke to make their peace with God.

Vse 2. Secondly, seeing Christ must needs vndergo so shamefull, ignominious, and so cursed a death, and all for the satisfying of Gods Iustice for sinne; we may here behold, as in a glasse, the cursed nature of sinne. If we looke vpon sinne in our selues, and in those miseries it brings vpon vs here, we can neuer sufficiently discouer the cursed nature thereof. But when we shall cast our eyes vpon the Lord Iesus Christ himselfe, and see him all to be racked and torne, crucified and tormented, agonizing water and bloud, yea crying

crying out in the perplexitie of his soule, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* This will let vs see sinne in the vgly face thereof.

And last of all, seeing that Christ became thus obedient vnto the Law, and by his sufferings bare the full curse and malediction of the same, and all to this end, to free vs from the curse, who were cast men by the law, and adiudged to death; this may serue for matter of singular comfort and consolation vnto the godly: for now whensoeuer Sathan shall accuse them, they may then triumph ouer Sathan, hell, and death, with Saint *Paul, Who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods chosen? It is God that iustifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that dyed, &c.* We haue therefore cause to reioyce in the Crosse of Christ aboue all things, and

Vse 3.

Rom. 8. 33

and to say with *Paul*, *I desire not to know any thing, but Christ and him crucified.*

And thus much for Christs sufferings.

Now we come to those two Malefactours that were crucified together with Christ.

Text. [39. *And one of the Theeues that were hanged, &c.*]

Before we come to handle these words, two doubts are to be removed.

Quest. I. *Exod.* 22. 1

In the old law theft was punished with restitution, *If a man shall steale an oxe, or a sheepe, and kill it, or sell it, he shall restore five oxen for an oxe, and foure sheepe for a sheepe.*

It may then be demanded, How then amongst the Romans, and so likewise amongst vs, comes

to

to be punished with death?

Answ. This was a *Iudiciall* Law for a time, and their countrie was more fruitfull then ours; and therefore were not so much hurt by stealing being rich, as we being poore. Besides our people are more cruell then they were, and therefore more sharper punishments are to be prouided.

λῃστὴς. But some conceiue that the word in the originall is to be vnderstood of such theft as is ioyned with murther, and so to be vnderstood of *day-theeues*, or robbers by the way side.

Quest. 2. Mat. 27. 44. But Saint *Matthew* hath it thus, *The theeues cast it in his teeth*: as if both of them had beene against Christ.

Answ. This is but *More Scripturæ, Numerus pro numero*: the Scriptures phrase, one number put for another, like that of Saint *Matthew*,

Ioh. 12.5. *them, When the diſciples ſaw it, that ſhe poured a box of oyntment vpon his head, they had indignation.* Now Saint *Iohn* ſaith, that this was but one diſciple, *Iudas*.

Or elſe it may bee anſwered thus: That both were wicked at the firſt, and at laſt one repented and conuerted, leauing his rayling and mocking, and beleeueth in Chriſt.

VERSE

VERSE 39.

And one of the euill doers which were hanged, rayled on him, saying, If thou be Christ, saue thy selfe and vs. Text.

WE haue here first of all the graceleſſe and impenitent *Theefe*, acting his part vpon the ſtage of the Croſſe.

Wherein are obſeruable,

1. The perſon, (*An euill doer.*)
2. His behauiour (*rayled.*)
3. On whom, (*on Christ.*)
4. In what manner.
   1. Calling the truth into queſtion, (*If thou be Christ.*)
   2. Scoffingly deſiring deliuerance from him, (*Saue thy ſelfe and vs.*)

Here we haue first of all to behold a graceleſſe, wicked, and impenitent I Perſon.

penitent wretch, suffering with Christ, and crucified together with him; howbeit the cause of their deaths was much different. Christ dyed innocently, this impenitent doth suffer iustly for his wickednesse: so that though the punishment seemed to be alike, the cause was not alike. Note hence.

Doct. 1. Not the punishmẽt but the cause maketh a Martyr. Non pœna sed causa, &c.

That not the punishment but the cause maketh a Martyr. What though this Impenitent were put to the like publike shame, and dyed that cursed and cruell death that Christ did, he suffered iustly for his deserts, and his publike punishment and shame was but the stipend of his sinne? *Let no man* (saith Peter) *suffer as an euil doer.* For what comfort can we haue in such kinde of sufferings? But when we shall suffer *wrongfully*, or in the cause, or for the sake

1. Pet. 4. 15.

of

of Christ, then may wee haue comfort. This made those holy seruants of Christ, *Paul* and *Silas*, to reioyce in prison, and to sing Psalmes, as if they had accounted their sufferings their greatest glory and happinesse. Tis true, to be a prisoner is matter of no praise or commendations. But to be a prisoner of Iesus Christ, or for Christ, this is it that wipes away the staine and blot. And hence is it that the Apostle *Paul* often mentioneth the cause of his sufferings, as his sufferings: *Paul a prisoner of Iesus Christ*, or *for Iesus Christ*: because it was for Christs sake that he suffered. Thus we reade that *Ioseph* lay bound in prison, with the rest of the Kings prisoners, howbeit the causes were not alike. So *Ioseph* againe with *Pharaohs* Baker and Butler was cast into the same pri-

Act. 16.25

Ephes. 3.1.

Phil. 1.

Gen. 39.20

Gen 40.3.

son, howbeit *Ioseph* falsly accused by his adulterous Mistrisse. The other suffer justly for their deserts.

1. Cor. 13 *Though I giue my body to the fire,* saith the Apostle, *that I burne, and haue not loue, it profiteth me nothing.* It is not the paines of martyrdome, nor all the torments in the world that will make a Martyr, if we suffer as euill doers, and not for well doing. And if it must needs be so: For,

Reas. It is not the punishment but the cause that approues vs to be faithfull bearers of the Crosse. For the euill of punishment in it selfe had its originall from the euill of sinne, and are indeed in themselues euidences of Gods wrath conceiued for sinne. And therefore if we suffer as sinners, our sufferings can bring vs no comfort, such they are tokens, not of the affection

affection, but of the indignation of God towards vs.

And surely this may serue to stop the mouthes of our aduersaries of *Rome*, that brag and boast of the sufferings of many of their Popish crew, as if they had dyed Martyrs at least: and some of them haue they *canonized* for Saints, who suffered indeed as Traytors, against their Prince and countrey, and deserued rather to be marked out with the blacke coale of *Infamy* and *shame* to posterity, then once to haue their names mentioned with the least respect of honour. *Vse* 1.

And what shall we say to the order of the *Franciscans* that is amongst them, an order that make profession of voluntary miseries, as if herein they did approue themselues to be the true disciples of Christ. Alas herein euen *Baals*

Priests and *Mahomets Deruices* out-bid them: they do something like Disciples, but yet they come short. *He that will be my disciple* (saith Christ) *let him take up his crosse and follow me. Cyprian* obserues, that the first Martyrs of the new Testament were children; so the cause of our martyrdome and sufferings should carry in it the innocency of children.

Obiect. O but, say some of our Romish Catholickes, we haue amongst vs that suffer daily for Religion, and their conscience euen to the spoyling of their goods, losse of their liberties, &c. and what will you make of these men, but holy men, and blessed Martyrs.

Answ. O but stay a while, for Religion, and for conscience doe they suffer? If for pure Religion and good conscience, this were praiseworthy indeed; and such suffer-

ings shall neuer go vnrewarded with God. But we must looke well to our owne consciences, that they do not misinforme vs, and conspire together with Sathan to worke our ruine: for, *The heart of man is deceitfull aboue all things, who can know it?* And Sathan himselfe is not more dangerous and deceitfull vnto a mans selfe, then his owne heart, and therefore we must bring our consciences to the word, and see that they bee rightly informed there, else wee can haue no comfort in our sufferings. But these suffer indeed most iustly, and that for their rebellions, idolatry, disobedience to authoritie, &c. and so as *euill doers*, to whom no promise of true comfort in such sufferings belonges. Ier. 18.

Secondly, this may admonish vs to take heed vnto our selues, *Vse 2.*

that whatsoeuer trouble or affliction soeuer wee meete with all here, that wee looke still vp the cause of our suffering, that it bee good, and not euill, as Saint Peter exhorteth: *Let none of you suffer as a murtherer, or as a theefe or as an euill doer, or as a busie body in other mens matters: yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed.* Many a man is smitten with the tongue, and lieth vnder shamefull reproach; some for their pride, some for their cruelties, couetousnesse, vnclean nesse, &c. and albeit their owne consciences cannot but pleade guilty to these enormities, yet they thinke they haue said enough for themselues, when they say that good men haue beene abused and reproached; yea Christ himselfe, say they. This I grant to bee most true, in Christ and good men, they

1. Pet. 4. 15

did

did indeed suffer disgrace and reproach in the world. But did they deserue it? Surely no.

Had they deserued it, they could haue had little comfort in their sufferings; And know that thou being guilty of those sinnes, the which the world doth iustly brand thee withall; it is iust with God, thou shouldest beare the shame thereof with men, either to bring thee to the sight thereof, and repentance for the same, or else to thy further obduration and hardening in sinne against the day of vengeance.

It is then but a foolish speech that is so common in the world, that when men suffer any indignitie from the hands of others vndeseruedly, to say, If I had deserued such things, it would neuer haue grieued me. Surely haddest thou deserued them, thou hadst

much cause to grieue; But Christians must take vp the contrary note, I reioyce in this that I deserued it not.

Vse 3. And last of all, this may iustly reproue those who respecting the present sufferings and afflictions of others, say, Surely he hath his punishment, nay his *Purgatory* here in this life; when as, alas, they suffering for sinne, these present miseries are but an earnest, and foretaste of the eternall iudgement which is reserued for them hereafter.

Text. (*And one of the euill doers that were hanged.*)

This impenitent Thiefe, howsoeuer he had escaped long in a course of sinne, at last comes to shame, and to a miserable end. And indeed God hath ioyned

these

these two together, *Sinne* and *shame*, and will in this example teach all men vnto the end of the world, That

Sinne and *shame* are companions, and go not farre asunder. Howsoeuer a sinner for a time may thriue and prosper in a course of sinning, yet this is but for a time; the Lord at last will ouertake them with his iudgements. *Howsoeuer a wicked man may prolong his life in wickednesse, yet destruction at length shall ouertake the sinner.* Sinne and the punishment of sinne are inseparable companions; if the one go before, the other will follow after. The Lord threatned *Adam*, that if he transgressed the commandement, he should dye the death. As God had a time to threaten, he found a time to execute the punishment. We may see this in *Cain*, *If thou doest*

Doct. 2 Sinne and shame go together.

Eccl. 7.15.

Gen. 2.17.

Gen. 4.7.

doeſt well (ſaith the Lord) ſhalt thou not be rewarded? If thou doſt euill, ſinne lyeth at thy doore. The old world that lay weltering in all manner of abhominations, the Lord at laſt remembred them with a iudgement from aboue. Gen. 19 5. The like of *Sodome* and *Gomorrh*. The people in the wilderneſſe murmured againſt *Moſes* and *Aaron*, the Lord therefore ſent fiery Serpents and Scorpions among them. Numb. 21. 5. 6. Yea Gods Church and people themſelues, when they haue ſinned againſt God, the Lord hath viſited their iniquities with the rod, and their ſinnes with ſcourges. *Dauid* numbred the people in the pride of his heart, God meetes with *Dauid* in the ſame, in weakening the number of them. So are *Dauids* ſinnes of adultery and murther, puniſhed with ſeuerall puniſhments from 1. Sam. 24. 2. Sam. 12.

the

the Almightie. But why should I spend time in so cleare a truth, God hath sent his Iudgements vpon men, & Angels, kingdomes and commonwealths, houses and families, persons and places, all haue tasted of the Lords rodde, when once they haue sinned against him. And this proceeds

Reas. 1. First of all from that holinesse that is in God, who is indeed holinesse it selfe, and therefore cannot but punish sin, that is so opposite vnto that pure nature of his: the more holy, iust, and righteous God is, the more is he displeased with the sinnes of men, and his Iustice calls for vengeance vpon transgressours. Though the Lord delighteth not in the punishment of men, yet he delighteth in his owne Iustice, according to which punishment is due. It is not euill in God to punish the wicked for the loue of Iustice, but euill

euill in the wicked to deserue punishment for the loue of sin: for God forbid, but that the Iudge of all the world should do right.

Gen. 18. 25.

Secondly, it is grounded vpon the prouidence of God, he suffereth no disorder to be in the whole vniuerse. Now sinne is nothing else but a swaruing from order; therefore it is brought into order by punishment. The inequalitie and disorder that is in sinne, being made equall and orderly thus; It is equall and orderly that he that will needs taste of the sweetnesse of sinne, against the will of God, should be constrained to taste of the bitternesse of punishment against his owne will.

2

Aquin.

Thirdly, in regard of the good of Gods Church, it is necessarie that God should thus punish sin, for otherwise if God did not cut off, and restraine offenders in a course

3

course of sinning by his iustice, men would liue like *Beasts*, *Lyons*, *Wolues*, and *Tygers*, Yea these ravenous Beasts would not make more hauock, then wicked men; if God had not met with *Pharaoh* what had become of Israel? if God had not met with *Haman*, what had become of the Iewes?

Exo.14.25

Hest.7.6.

But wee see that wicked men doe not alwayes come to shame for their sins here in this life.

Obiect.

It is their greatest punishment not to be punished.

Nihil est infelicius felicitate peccantium, &c. Aug.

Secondly, wicked men are punished whilest they are spared; for what greater punishment then to bee giuen ouer to their owne hearts lusts.

Thirdly, it is a signe that God reserues such for a more fearefull punishment after death.

Seeing then that *shame* doth thus accompany *sin* as an insepa-

Vse 1.

rable

rable companion, how soever God many times suffereth long. This sheweth in the first place the lamentable estate of all wicked and impenitent sinners, who lye in sin and wallow in all manner of ungodlinesse, their condemnation doth not sleepe. Howsoever the wicked now are secure, and put from them the thoughts of sin, & the punishment due for the same, yet so long as the sinner standeth guiltie of sinne before the Lord, there is a most certaine expectation of judgement. Indeed such is that euill disposition in the heart of man, that as *Salomon* saith,

Eccl. 8. 11. *Because sentence against an euill worke is not presently executed, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do euill.*

ver. 12. But what followeth, *though a sinner doe euill an hundred times and his dayes be prolonged, &c. it shall*

not

not be well with the wicked.

And againe, *Woe to the wicked, it shall bee ill with him, for the reward of his hands shall bee given him.* There is nothing more certaine then punishment to the sinner. Esa. 3. 11.

Secondly, this may bee a loud call vnto vs all vnto repentance, for those former sinnes we haue committed, Sithence sin is so displeasing vnto God, and drawes after it such a tayle of iudgments. And that wee take notice of his patience and long-suffering towards vs, who hath spared vs so long a time. Indeed if sinne were an indifferent thing with God, & that he were neither pleased, nor displeased with vs for the same, then to repent, or not to repent, were a thing likewise indifferent. But sithence *sinne* brings with it *shame* and punishment, it is time for 2

for vs to looke about vs, and let vs take heede of securitie, and labour to please God with reuerence and feare, *For our God is a consuming fire.*

Rom. 12. 29.

Thirdly, as this may terrifie all wicked and vngodly men to consider the most vndoubted certaintie of Gods wrath and vengeance against sin; so it may minister matter of comfort vnto the godly, for their reward is likewise with the Lord, and their recompence with their God. For can the Lord be more iealous of his iustice then hee is of his mercy? will hee pay tribulation and anguish to euery soul that doth euil, and shall the labours of his seruants in his seruice bee in vaine? it is farre from the iudge of all the world to doe vniustly. *Say ye* (saith the Lord by his Prophet) *to the righteous, it shall be well with him,*

3.

Esay 3. 10.

for

for they shall eate the fruit of their doings.

The consideration of this, comforted *Paul* ouer all his troubles, *I haue fought a good fight, I haue finished the course; henceforth there is layd vp for mee a crowne of righteousnesse, which Christ the righteous Iudge shall giue mee in that day, and not to me onely, &c.* 2 Tim. 4. 7. 8. Let vs then rest vpon the gratious promises of our God, being assured that couenant he hath made with his, is surer then the couenant with day and night of the *Sun* and of the *Moone*, he is Yea, and Amen, in all his promises, & as iealous of his Truth with his seruants, as of his iustice with the wicked.

Reyled on him. *Text.*

We haue heard before how the 2

His behauiour.

sinne of this Malefactor hath brought vpon him *shame*, and God in his iustice hath now ouertaken him in a course of sinning, and brought vpon him his deserued punishment, his sinfull wretched life, hath now a miserable and cursed death.

We are now to come to his behauiour at the time of his death, *He railed on Christ.*

First, the Euangelist obserueth how this *Impenitent* at this time of his death fell to raile vpon Christ. He is so farre from being humbled in the sense of his sinne, or in any penitent maner to make confession of the same, considering that now he was from a temporall to come before an eternall Iudge, and from the condemnation of the one, to passe vnder the condemnation of the other, so that he groweth worse by his pu-

nishmen

nishment and becomes more desperatly sinful, *He railed on Christ.* Note hence,

That when the Lord shall ouertake the wicked with his iudgements, which might bring them to the sense of their sinne and repentance for the same, as we shall see hereeafter in the *Penitent*, they doe but make the wicked worse. Doth this wretched and miserable man, now that the Lords hand is vpon him, come to see his sinnes, and bewaile his former sinfull course, confessing and crying downe his owne abominations, intreating for mercy at Gods hand in the pardon of the same, surely no; But his heart is more obstinate, and his conscience more hardned and becoms scared as it were with a hot-yron, hee hath now a heart that cannot repent but becomes more desperately

Doct. 1. Afflictions make the wicked worse.

Rom. 2. 5.

Gen. 15. 16

His behauiour.

sinne of this Malefactor hath brought vpon him *shame*, and God in his iustice hath now ouertaken him in a course of sinning, and brought vpon him his deserued punishment, his sinfull wretched life, hath now a miserable and cursed death.

We are now to come to his behauiour at the time of his death, *He railed on Christ.*

First, the Euangelist obserueth how this *Impenitent* at this time of his death fell to raile vpon Christ. He is so farre from being humbled in the sense of his sinne, or in any penitent maner to make confession of the same, considering that now he was from a temporall to come before an eternall Iudge, and from the condemnation of the one, to passe vnder the condemnation of the other, as that he groweth worse by his punishment

nishment and becomes more desperately sinful, *He railed on Christ.* Note hence,

That when the Lord shall ouertake the wicked with his iudgements, which might bring them to the sense of their sinne and repentance for the same, as we shall see hereafter in the *Penitent*, they doe but make the wicked worse. Doth this wretched and miserable man, now that the Lords hand is vpon him, come to see his sinnes, and bewaile his former sinfull course, confessing and crying downe his owne abominations, intreating for mercy at Gods hand in the pardon of the same, surely no; But his heart is more obstinate, and his conscience more hardned and becoms seared as it were with a hot-yron, hee hath now a heart that cannot repent but becomes more desperately

Doct. 1. Afflictions make the wicked worse.

Rom. 2. 5.

Gen. 15. 16

wretched and sinfull, still more
Mat 23.32 and more to his last breath. And
this is vsually seene in the wicked
daily, notwithstanding the Lords
corrections vpon them: they pro-
ceed from euill to worse, vntill
they haue at length filled vp the
measure of their iniquities, vnto
their eternall destruction.

Gen.4.13. When the Lord conuicted
Cain of his cruell and vnnaturall
murther of his owne brother,
how bare he the Lords reprehen-
sion? did he resolue into teares of
repentance, did hee confesse his
fault, and craue pardon at Gods
hand? Nothing lesse. Nay rather
did he not complaine of God, that
his punishment was ouer seuere:
My punishment is greater then I
can beare.

Exod.10. We may see this in *Pharaoh*, in
those tenne plagues the Lord
brought vpon him and his peo-
ple

ple, they were so farre from humbling him, as that they made his heart still more obdurate and hard vnto his owne destruction. Euen so the people of Israel, the more the Lord afflicted them in the wilderneſſe, the more they murmured: The more they were smitten, the more they fell away: insomuch as the Prophet taketh vp this complaint of them: *O Lord thou hast smitten them, but they haue not sorrowed: Thou hast consumed them, but they haue refused to receiue correction: They haue made their faces harder then a rocke, they haue refused to returne.* Euen so the holy Ghost brings in those *Antichristian* Idolaters, in the time of their miſerie knawing their tongues for sorrow, and blaſpheming the God of heauen for their paines and for their sores, and repented not of

Ier. 5.3.

their works to giue God the glory. As ſiluer that is put into the fire, if nothing come out but droſſe, is found *Reprobate ſiluer*: So the wicked not refined in the fornace of affliction, ſhew themſelues but reprobate men. Whereas the godly, as we ſhall ſee hereafter in the Penitent *Thiefe*, the fire of affliction purgeth their droſſe, and makes them purer euer after, like good *Hezekiah*, and *Dauid*, who being once rightly humbled, recounted euer after their foregoing ſins to the griefe of their hearts, and wounding of their ſoules. And it muſt needs be thus: for,

Ier. 6.

Reaſ. 1. Firſt, the wicked through their cuſtome and continuance in euill, haue quite loſt the ſenſe and feeling of ſinne in their owne conſciences; as a man that is poſſeſſed with a Frenzie, is inſenſible of

Rom. 1. 28. 29.

wounds,

wounds, or ſtripes, or blowes, be they neuer ſo mortall, but laugheth and ſporteth himſelfe in the middeſt of them all. So euen ſo is it with a ſinner poſſeſſed with a ſpirituall Frenzie, he hath no feeling at all of his ſinnes, his conſcience is dead and benumined. And therefore as the eſtate of that ſicke man is moſt deſperate, who is not ſenſible of his diſeaſe: So is the caſe of a ſinner, that perceiueth not the rod of God, when he ſtriketh. 1. Tim. 4. 2.

Secondly, to profit aright by afflictions, to bee humbled by them, and to returne vnto God, is the worke of grace accompanying the croſſe, and to bee found only in the godly, who are quickned thereby in all holy duties. So *Dauid, It is good for me that I haue beene afflicted.* For it is with affliction as it is with the Word, 2 Hoſ. 6. 1. Pſal. 119. 71.

when they fall vpon a gracious heart, they are by Gods blessing very fruitfull and profitable: but but when they light vpon a hard heart, they are by accident very hurtfull, and harden the same more and more to destruction. As the Sunne shining vpon the waxe doth soften it, and vpon the clay doth make it more hard, and as by one and the same heate, a sweete smell is drawne out of a precious ointment, and a noysome smell out of any putrid matter; So doth the word and affliction produce different effects in the hearts of men, it skils not what the affliction be, so the matter on which it works be good.

Tantum interest non qualia sed qualis quisque patiatur. Aug.

Vse 1. This shewes the misery of all wicked and vngodly men, that liue and lie in sinne without repentance; They are like vnto a man that hath lost himselfe in the night

night time, he goeth still further and further from his way, or like a cold stomacke that turneth the best food into putrefaction. Euen so the most excellent things of God, such as are the *Word*, *Sacraments*, and those afflictions which the Lord vseth many times, as a meanes to humble the godly, these are all of them abused by the wicked to their destruction. For as all things worke together for the best of them that loue God: so by the rule of contraries, all things worke for the worst of the wicked; They corrupt all things, they defile all things. Rom.8.28.

Oh the misery of a wicked man, that whether he enioy weale or woe, prosperity or aduersitie, are still posting to hel, and hastening their owne destruction.

Secondly, seeing that afflictions make the wicked worse, wee 2

may

may by the rule of this Doctrine, take triall of our hearts, and so consequently of our estates, by considering the vse we haue made of our afflictions; often hath the hand of God bene vpon vs, on some in one kind, and on some in another, let vs consider how we haue behaued our selues vnder the same, haue we *learned righteousnesse*. When Gods iudgements haue gone abroad, haue they giuen vs occasion to search and try our wayes, and to turne vnto the Lord? this is a good signe of a gratious heart, but if we finde vpon due examination, that the Lords hand hath no whit humbled vs, but that we find our hearts as hard as before, and we the same when we came out of afflictions we were when we first came into them, a fearefull signe of a graceless heart.

Esay 26.9.

Lam. 3.40.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, this giues vs sufficient warrant what to iudge of that man, who in time of affliction, hath cast off to seeke the Lord, hath murmured, blasphemed, sought to the Physitian and not to God, if affliction better them not, their case is miserable.

(Ruyled on him.) *Text.*

Thus hee goeth on from one sin to another, from euil to worse, and his last sin, his reuiling and reproaching of Christ, worst of all. And herein will teach vs,

That when a wicked man beginneth once to fall away from God. They haue no stay of themselues, but proceed on still, from one sin to another, neuer resting vntill at length they come to the height of all wickednesse & prophanesse. We may see this cleare in

Doct. 2. When the wicked begin once to fall away from God, they haue no stay of themselues.

in this present example, this wicked and graceleſſe man, giuing himſelfe vp to a ſinfull courſe of life, liuing by *Theft*, rapine and much cruelty towards others, he reſts not there, but falls to railing and reproaching the Lord Ieſus Chriſt himſelfe.

And thus indeed the corruption of our nature is like thoſe heauy bodies, which being throwne vp, moue more ſlowly at the firſt, the motion of the ayre hindering and reſtraining them, but the nearer they come to their place the earth, the ſwifter they moue; So ſinne moues ſlowly at the firſt, by reaſon it is reſtrained by feare or ſhame, but the nearer it brings the ſinner to the graue or to hell, the ſwifter it moues and the more hardly reſtrained, it comes with ſuch a violent ſwinge, it is hardly ſtaid, as heere in this man who

was

was moſt wicked, when hee was neareſt his end. This truth may further be cleared by diuers examples in the booke of God, not only in the wicked, but alſo in the godly themſelues, who haue made a fearefull progreſſe in ſin, when once they began to fall from God, thus was it with *Eua*, when Sathan had once preuailed with her, to lend an eare vnto his charmes. Firſt *ſhe ſaw* the fruite, and ſet open her eyes, the caſements of her ſoule, by the which the deuill wound himſelfe into her heart. Secondly, *ſhe deſired*. Thirdly, *tooke of it*. Fourthly, *ſhe eate thereof*; Still the further the worſe. Thus was it with *Cain*, *Pharaoh*, *Saul*, *Iudas*, *&c.* If we examine their ſinnes and fallings away from God, wee ſhall finde that all was not vpon a ſuddaine, neither did Sathan ſet vpon them with Gen. 3.

with his noysom temptations all at the first; But brought them on by degrees, according to that of the Prophet; *they bend their tongs like their bow to lyes, but they are not valiant for the truth vpon the earth, for they proceed from euill to euill, and they know not me, saith the Lord.* Ier. 9. 3. Againe, the Lord complaining of his people that they made not the right vse of their afflictions, saith, *Why should ye bee stricken any more? ye will reuolt more and more.* Esay. 1. 5. Yea this is true, not only in the wicked, but euen in the godly themselues, as wee may see in *Ionas*, the Lords Prophet. Ionas 1. In *Dauid*, who fell from one sin to another, and the last the worst. Of *Peter*, that from a bare deniall of Christ fell to curse and to sweare, that hee knew not Christ. Mat. 26. 70. Besides, I dare say that he is but a titular Christian, that finds

not

not this truth in some degree or other by wofull experience in himselfe. And this thing so comes to passe;

First, in regard of Sathan who doth commonly so fortifie, what hold soeuer hee winneth to himselfe, that whensoeuer he findeth the heart of a sinner *swept* and *garnished*, by euill thoughts and sinfull imaginations, fit to entertaine Sathan, Sathan will then bring with him seauen spirits worse then himselfe, and these will enter in and dwell there, and so the later end of that man will be worse then the first. *Reas.* 1. Luk 11.

Secondly, in regard of sin it selfe, the which will fret daily more and more, as the Apostle saith, *as doth a Canker*, which we see infecteth one member after another, vntill at last it hath won the whole body: our Sauiour 2 2 Pet. 2. 17

com-

compareth it to a peece of *leuen* which is of a diffusing nature, that will sower the whole lump, so is it with sin, when it shall once be entertained, it is like a shameleſſe Gueſt, it will grow impudent and will not easily be shaken off.

3. Thirdly, in regard of the sinner himselfe, who hauing often made shipwrack, of faith and of a good conscience, the mouth of conscience at last comes to be stopped that the sinner runs on in sin without controlement.

It is the mercy of God vnto his people, that whensoeuer they sin against him, they may haue a monitor within them, that will giue them no peace in sin; That sin becomes not *sweete in their mouths*, as *Iob* speaketh of the wicked; But when a man shall reliſh sin, and goe on in a licencious course without check of conscience,

ence or any controlement such a one is not far from distruction;

And last of all, in regard of God himselfe, who being often and still, and againe prouoked, through the contempt of grace offered, and through obstinacy & willfulnesse in sinning is prouoked at last to cast off the sinner, and to striue no more with him. This was the iudgment the Lord threatned against the sinful world in the dayes of *Noah*, *My spirit shal no more striue with mans spirit*. Of all the iudgmēts, the most fearfullest, whē the Lord shal cast of a sinner his care, lay the raines in the neck like a father whose son hath run riot long, & by no means wil be reclaimed. This is a sure fore-runner of distruction. O then happy and thrice happy is he that sinneth least, next he that returneth home soonest, but most wofull is the estate of him that comes once

4

Gen 6.

to be hardned in ſinne, that with *Ieroboam*, hath ſold himſelfe to worke wickedneſſe in the ſight of the Lord.

Vſe I. Seeing then that wee ſee thus the curſed nature of ſinne, and the miſerable condition of the wicked, that when they begin once to fall away from God, they haue no ſtay of themſelues, but proceed from euill to worſe, and from one degree of ſinne vnto another, vntill at laſt there be no remedie. Oh how may this awaken euery wicked and vngodly man and woman, to conſider that when a man beginneth once to leaue God, God leaueth him: and when God once forſaketh a man, the deuill takes poſſeſſion of the heart of ſuch a one. This appeares in *Cain*, *Pharaoh*, *Saul*, *Iudas*, &c. if we ſhould trace theſe mens falling off from God ſtep by ſteppe, we

ſhall

shall see from what small beginnings sinne tooke root in them, and being so entertained, increased in them daily more and more, God more and more forsaking them, their corruptions daily more and more increasing; and at last breaking out into open rebellion against God, and open desperation against their owne soules. Oh the misery of a sinner, thus forsaken of God! Oh the misery of that soule that once comes to bee remorselesse in sinne! Poore soules, these are in misery and see it not; are vnder Gods wrath, and regard it not. Lay before these their misery in regard of sinne, beseech them with teares, exhort them by the tender mercies of God, threaten against them the iudgements of the Law, offer vnto them the promises of the Gospell, intreat them by the death of

Christ, and the warmest bloud that issued from his blessed side. All these things wil no way affect them, nor any whit moue them, but as *Iob* speaketh of the *Leuiathan*, *His heart is harder then the nether milstone*: that is, the state of those whom God hath once left to hardnesse of heart, and giuen vp to reprobate sense, whose heart doth not quake and tremble to consider these things.

2 Secondly, the consideration hereof should admonish euery man and euery woman, and euery mothers childe amongst vs, to take heed of sinne, and to dread it as we would dread a Serpent, or a Cockatrice, and that in regard of the deceitfulnesse of sinne, which if it haue any entertainment, it will waite on thee like a Catchpole, dogge thee vp and downe like a Sergeant, and follow thee

like

like thy owne shadow; thou canst not shake it off when thou wouldest: this the godly haue found most true by wofull experience in themselues, how hard a thing it hath beene to ouercome any sinne that hath beene entertained with them any time, if it be but some idle oath, or vnsauorie speech that they haue vsed, how hard a thing is it to leaue it: Which shewes how wonderfully such men deceiue their owne soules, that will seeme to stint themselues in sinning, as if they had power in themselues to leaue sinne at their pleasure. These very thoughts shew that thou art in bondage vnder some corruptions, and art in the power of Sathan, and so in danger of destruction.

So then we must destroy sinne whileſt it is an egge, and smother

it in the first conception, as we destroy the young whelpes of the prey. For as the Apostle shewes, *Lust conceiued brings forth sinne, and sinne when it is finished, it brings forth death.* Wherein the holy Ghost teacheth vs how dangerous a thing it is, to giue the least entertainment vnto sinne; it is like a Bird called the *Lapwhing*, which is no sooner hatched, but it runnes abroad. And indeed sinne is much easier kept out then cast out: It shall then be our wisedome to heed our selues betimes, and euer to looke to our watch, that we may preuent sinne euen at the first motions and occasions thereof: an high point of heauenly wisedome.

Text. *Rayled on him.*

Sinfull and wretched was the life

life of this man, and curſed and wretched was his death, not onely in reſpect of the nature of his death, which tis true was a curſed death to be *crucified*; But alſo in regard of his fearefull end that he made, that hee ſhould dye thus blaſpheming of Chriſt. But it is not to be wondered at, for it was anſwerable vnto his life. And herein will teach vs. Deu, 21. 23

What a dangerous thing it is to liue wickedly: for commonly as the life is, ſo is the death; a good life, a good death; an euill life, commonly an euill death. Here is a wofull end, and a fearefull ſpectacle of a wretched life: as his life was voyde of grace, ſo was his death voide of comfort; his life was wretched, his death was damnable. *Doct.* 3. A ſinfull life hath commonly a curſed death.

And this was not onely in reſpect of his body, but alſo in re-

gard of his soule, the which no doubt went from the *Crosse* to *Hell*, as it was said of *Iudas*, that
Act.1.25. *He went to his owne place*, that is, to *hell*. And indeed the Scriptures affoord vs diuers examples of wicked and vngodly men, such who as their liues haue beene wretched and sinfull, so haue died wretched and miserable deaths.
Ex.14.25. *Pharaoh* a sworne enemy to Gods Church and people, what a fearfull end came hee vnto with his people, being ouerwhelmed in the sea, and there perished. *Haman*,
Hest.5.6.7 a great Fauourite vnder the *Persian* king, an enemy to Gods Church and people, came himselfe to dye that death hee had prepared for *Mordecai*, and fell himselfe into the same pit he had made for others. Thus do wee reade of Gods heauy iudgement
Dan.5.5. vpon *Balthazzar*, the king of Babylon,

bylon, at his royotous feaſt, abuſing the holy veſſels of the Temple prophanely, the Lord at the ſame time ouertooke him with his iudgements. The like of *Ahab* and *Ieſabel*, the ſtory makes mention of their fearefull ends, the very dogs did eate *Ieſabel*, that bloudy and butcherly Queene, that had murthered ſo many of the Lords Prophets. The like we reade of *Saul*, that hauing in his life time perſecuted *Dauid*, at laſt fell vpon his owne ſword. The like of *Herod*, that was deuoured with lice. Of *Iudas*, that in the dayes of our Sauiour Chriſt had played the cloſe and cunning hypocrite, what a fearefull end came that wretch vnto at laſt; the Text ſaith, *He hanged himſelfe*: perceiuing at laſt what a horrible ſinne he had committed in betraying the Lord of life, he iudged himſelfe

1 Reg. 21.

Mat. 27. 5.

ſelfe vnworthy of life. Now as his life was wicked, his death was wretched; for beſides that he made away himſelfe, and ſo became the curſed inſtrument of his owne death: The Lord ſhewed a ſtrange token vpon him at his death, for when he was hanged, Act. 1. 18. *He burſt aſunder in the middeſt, and all his bowels guſhed out.* There is a Tradition that ſaith, that when *Iudas* was dead, he ſtunke ſo noyſomely, that no man could come neare him; and yet this was not all, for as the end of his body was miſerable, ſo was it alſo in regard of his ſoule: for the Act. 1. 25. Euangeliſt obſerueth, *That he went to his owne place*, that is, to *hell*, there to remaine for euer, to be tormented with the deuill and his Angels. And the like may be ſaid of *Abitophel*, *Abſolom*, *Ananias*, and *Saphira*, &c. Act. 5.

And

And beſides the examples of Gods iudgements out of diuine Writ, of thoſe whoſe liues as they haue beene wicked and vngodly, ſo their deaths haue beene curſed and miſerable, Eccleſiaſticall hiſtories affoord vs infinite. *Eelix* Earle of *Wartemberg*, hauing a long time beene a moſt cruell perſecutour of Chriſts Church, ſware to his companions at a ſupper, that ere he dyed, hee would ride vp to the ſpurres in the bloud of *Lutherans*. But the ſame night the reuengefull hand of God ſtroke him, euen in the height of his malice and cruelty, that hee was ſtrangled in his bed with his owne bloud. *Stephen Gardiner*, in Queene *Maries* dayes a bloudy perſecutour, ſitting at dinner at the very time when *Ridly* and *Latimer* were burned at Oxford, he gloried and reioyced excee-

Acts and Mon. Fox.

exceedingly thereat; But the hand of God incontinently stroke him, that he was carried presently to bed; where his body was inflamed by reason he could not expell his vrine, and his tongue mightily swolne, and black, hanging out of his mouth most fearfully, and so miserably dyed.

The like wee reade of *Bourne*, *Morgan*, *Thornton*, &c. who hauing beene cruell persecutours, God brought them to shamefull and miserable ends.

Yea our owne experience daily doth manifest this truth vnto vs, that such as haue liued vitiously, riotously, and wickedly, what miserable deaths they many times come vnto. How many filthy adulterers hath God cut off, with filthy rotten and loathsome diseases, causing rottennesse to enter into their bones, and bringing them

them to miserable ends. How many beastly drunkards, that haue beene inflamed with their strong drinke, hath the Lord cut off in the very middest of their drunkennesse, and so haue dyed most shamefully and miserably.

How many murtherers hath the Lord pursued, whom none else could accuse, and made the malefactours themselues confesse their horrible facts, and all to bring a sinfull and wretched life to a shamefull and miserable end. Surely the Lord is wonderfull in his iudgements. Oh that men were wise to lay the same to heart!

But we see many times the wicked, whose liues haue beene vile and sinfull, haue prospered all their dayes, yea and their death it selfe hath not seemed to bee so miserable vnto them. *Obiect. 1.*

It

Resp. 1

It is true, God many times suffereth the wicked to prosper in the world: *Their houses* (as *Iob* saith) *are peaceable, and without feare: and the rodde of God doth not alwayes fall vpon them.* What then? Is their case any whit the more happie? *Doth not prosperitie slay the foole?* And what are all the pompes and pleasures of the wicked, but as a blazing Starre, presaging ruine and destruction. And what though the wicked passe their time in pleasures, and feare no euill, doth securitie profit any? will a man enuy him that goeth to execution in a Satten suit? Is not their destruction the neare at hand, and so much the more fearefull when it commeth?

2

Secondly, the best furniture against Death is, *Faith, hope,* and a good conscience. But *what hope the wicked* (saith *Iob*) *when God*

Iob 27. 8.

shall

shall take away his soule? meaning indeed he hath no hope.

O but these men dye peaceably, euen like lambes in their beds! *Obiect. 2.*

So may a wicked man do and yet go to hell, and be in no better case (as *Dauid* obserueth) then the very beast in death; *Man* (saith he) *shall not continue in honour, but is like the beasts that dye.* And indeed there is many times little difference betwixt the death of a beast, and that of a wicked man, saue the one hath many times a pillow vnder his head, and the other dyeth in a ditch. *When the wicked dye, all his hope perisheth.* *Answ.* Pro. 11. 7.

But we see that a wicked life doth not alwayes bring a cursed death: the other Thiefe that liued loosly and wickedly, yet at last repented, and was saued, and God hath made a promise, that at *Obiect. 3.*

what

what time soeuer a sinner doth repent, &c.

Resp. I answer, tis true, the other Thiefe repenting, and beleeuing in Christ, was saued at the very last. But what? was not this miraculous? Did not Christ now vpon a speciall occasion to shew the effect of his bloud, the power of his passion, and to demonstrate vnto the world his Deitie, euen now at his loweſt ebbe of humiliation, shew his power in the conuersion of the *Thiefe*? Must this extraordinarie example now be propounded as a president for euer? that was but *ouer, miraculous*, and wrought vpon speciall occasion; So mayest thou looke againe for the renting of the stones, the opening of the graues, and the raising of the dead, and to see againe those other miracles of Christ, that did accompanie the

conuer

conuersion of his. And for further satisfaction consider,

First, that it is not impossible, but that this was the first time of the call of this *Thiefe*, that he had neuer heard Christs Sermons before, or had any outward call before this time, that now he came to suffer with Christ: and so his sinnes being of ignorance, might excuse in part, as *Paul* speaketh of his; *The Lord shewed mercy, because I did them ignorantly*. But now thou canst not pleade this ignorance, inasmuch as thou hast lyued vnder the Gospell, and hast had an outward call by the preaching of the same. 1

Secondly, this example of the penitent Thiefe, as it was extraordinary, so we see it singular: the Scriptures not leaning vs one example more of the like. Now particular examples are not to bee 2

1 Tim. 1. 13

vrged for a generall practise, especially in so weighty a thing as the saluation of the soule is. The other Thiefe that liued as he did, died not as he did; but our Text sheweth his miserable end, that he died impenitently, blasphemously, and desperately: and so haue we like wise seene euen now proued vnto vs the miserable end of many moe, whose liues as they haue beene sinfull, so their ends haue beene fearefull. If Sathan then, or thy owne sinfull corrupt hearte, shall go about to perswade thee as any time, that though thou takest thy sway and swing in sinne now, thou mayest haue after, when thou wilt thy selfe, repent with the good Thiefe, and so be saued; Answer Sathan thus, and tell thy heart from me, that it is a thousand fold more probable, that thou shalt dye as thou hast

haſt liued impenitently, wickedly, deſperately, with the *Impenitent Thiefe*, and ſo be damned rather, then to haue ſuch a ſingular grace giuen thee, and mercy ſhewed at the laſt houre, to repent with the *penitent Thiefe*, and ſo be ſaued.

But God hath ſaid, *That at what time ſoeuer, &c.* *Obiect.*

It is moſt true that *at what time ſoeuer, &c.* And it is the mercy of God that we haue that and the like places of Scripture left vnto vs to comfort vs, as a hand reached out vnto vs to keepe vs that we ſinke not in the pit of deſperation, being ſo conſcious vnto our ſelues of ſo many impieties, through the which we haue forfaited Gods fauour and loue in Ieſus Chriſt, and made our ſelues liable vnto his wrath and vengeance for euer. *Reſp.*

But though the Lord say *at what time soeuer a sinner* doth *repent* he will *blot out*, he doth not say *at what time soeuer a sinner doth sinne he will giue repentance*, *Repentance* is Gods gift, *proning* (saith the Apostle) if *at any times God will giue thē repentance*. And though God giue forgiuenesse euer to the penitent, hee doth not euer giue repentance to the sinner. And if the Lord giue not this gift and grace of repentance, it is impossible for a sinner euer to repent. Nay when the Lord hath once in the Gospel made tender of grace & saluation, conuincing our iudgements and bringing sin to sight, with the wages of sin, which is the wrath of God, and destruction of soule and body for euer; And with all tendering vs a gratious pardon in the blood of his Son, & that vpon

Qui promisit pœnitenti veniam, Non promisit peccanti pœnitentiā. Aug.

our

our true repentance, hee will bee againe reconciled vnto vs; which tender of grace & mercy offered, when it shall bee on our part reiected, and men shall perfer their owne sinfull lusts before their peace, and by their obstinacy and willfull rebellion in sin, trample vnder foote the blood of the Lord Iesus; the time may come, nay the time will come, when thou wouldest faine repent thee of thy sins, and canst not: the Lord then may giue thee vp to hardnesse of heart, and finall impenitency.

And therefore dally not with sin, presume not to repent at thy pleasure; But breake off thy sins betime by repentance, & remember that God will not be mocked, *Whatsoeuer a man soweth* (saith the Apostle) *that shall hee reape.* The whole life of a Christian should bee but a preparation for

death, for in dying well doth consist the wellfare of a Christian for euer; Now it is in grace in some sort as it is in nature, the seede cast into the ground must haue some time to roote, to battle, to spring and to bring forth fruite; and according as the *seede* is, so is the *crop*; we must sow in *teares*, if we wil reape in *ioy*. And largly in the one, if we will reape abundantly in the other. Againe, men doe not sowe *tares* and looke to reape *wheate*; Besides, neuer was there seene a *Seed-time*, *Spring*, *Summer* and *Harueſt*, come together.

Modica ſementi detractio eſt magnum meſſis detrimentum. Bern.

O then! why should Sathan and our owne sinfull hearts thus delude vs, to thinke that wee may reape the crop of glory in heauen, & neuer sowed the seede of grace on earth. Whereas God hath ioyned these two together, *grace* & *glory*; *Without holineſſe*, no man

shall see the Lord.

To returne now to the vses.

Vse I.

Seeing this is so then, that an euill life hath commonly an euill death, then the madnesse of those men is to bee mourned for, as *Samuel* mourned for *Saul*, that flatter themselues in their sinfull courses, that they shall at last dye happily, when they haue had no care nor conscience in their liues to liue holily. Indeed I confesse that heauen hath many well wil-lers, who would not goe to hea-ven & auoid the torments of hell? Cursed *Balaam* himselfe can wish that his *soule might dye the death of the righteous*; though he had no regard at all to liue the life of the righteous. But these are but bare *wishes*, in the wicked, they cannot properly be called *desires*, because they come but from some sudaine passion in the heart, when

Numb. 23.

the thoughts of *death*, *Iudgement*, or *Hell*, possesse them.

Whereas the *desires* of the godly are euer ioyned with the meanes conducing thereunto: such as are the daily hatred of sinne, growth in mortification, daily increase of heauenly knowledge, faith, repentance, and the like. But these men separate those whom God hath ioyned together, *grace* and *glory*. And though their liues be neuer so vile, wretched, and sinfull, presume that it shall go well with them in death. No question this *Impenitent Thief* could not but see that his sinfull course of life; and his heart must needs smite him sometimes for the same. And what might be the answer he gaue his heart, euery man may iudge, that though he ran a sinfull course for a time, yet he would repent at last, and become

a new man. Thus is it now with the drunkard, swearer, vsurer, yea the prophanest lining; for none can be so desperately sinfull, but sometimes their hearts smite them, and they answer them still with a late repentance, as if repentance were in their power. But at last comes death and ouertakes the sinner, and now is he taken as a Bird in the snare; Now he sees when it is too late, how Sathan and his owne cursed heart haue kept him hudwinkt, and now in stead of confession of sinne, and sorrow of heart for their former abhominations, and calling on God by earnest and hearty prayer, all which they promised vnto themselues at this time; Behold here in this *Impenitent Thiefe*, hardnesse of heart, and finall impenitency, yea he falls to mocking, and blaspheming the Lord of life,

life, from whom ſaluation commeth.

Canſt thou heare theſe things, thou that art a drunkard, ſwearer, vncleane perſon, that lyeſt and liueſt in thy ſinnes, and not haue thy heart tremble within thee? I will conclude with that of *Moſes*, Deut. 29. *O that men were wiſe, then would they conſider their latter end.*

2 Secondly, ſeeing then that the late and laſt houres repentance (the common refuge of wicked men) as it falls ſhort of holineſſe in life, ſo it ſeldome reacheth to happineſſe in death. It ſhall be our wiſedome then, betimes to lay for this worke of repentance, and to liue an holy life, that hath the promiſe of an happie death. Get we grace in life, we ſhall not miſſe of glory in death: Pſal. 73. *Marke the vpright man, and behold the iuſt, the latter end* (ſaith *Dauid*)

of

of that man is peace. They shall enter vpon peace, and shall rest in their beds. Who? *Euery one walking before the Lord in righteousnesse.* Isa. 57.2.

So *Paul, I haue kept the faith, henceforth there is laid vp for me a crowne of righteousnesse.* 2. Tim. 4. Thus runne then the promises of blessednesse in death to such, and such onely who walke with God in a holy life.

But we see sometimes euen of those holy Brethren that haue liued so purely and so godly; in death they haue raged and blasphemed, yea and behaued themselues as men in desperation. *Obiect.* 5.

Tis true, this hath beene the case, and so may bee of the most holy and sanctified seruants of Christ, and yet this concludeth not that their deaths must needs therefore be miserable. For such may *Resp.*

may be the nature of the disease, as the *Strangury*, *Colique*, burning Feauer, and the like, that may cause this distemper in the best: Now they are but the words of distemper, and not spoken out of reason or iudgement, neither will the Lord impute them vnto his seruants: *For will God cast away his people?* God forbid. Neither can mans changeable tongue alter Gods vnchangeable decree.

Rom. 11. 1

Or at the most such distempered words vttered by the godly at last, are but forced through some violent temptation of Sathan, which the diuell shall answer for, and not the godly; neither conclude the want of loue to God, or deliberate purpose to sinne, but rather humane frailty, which shall not hinder true happinesse.

On

On him.

3

On whom.

That is, on Christ, hee rayled not on his fellow that was a Malefactour with himselfe: no, they were as *Simeon* and *Leui*, brethren in iniquitie; But vpon the most innocent, the Lord Iesus Christ himselfe.

Herein teaching vs,

That none are more obnoxious and liable vnto disgrace and reproach then the godly are, yea the better the Christian, the more subiect to the reproach of wicked men. Let no man then that is religious and godly indeed, thinke that he can escape the mockeries and derisions of the wicked; it is the portion of the Lord Iesus Christ himselfe, he vndergoeth this at the hands of sinners, yet both patiently beare it. This was

Doct. 1. None more liable to disgrace then the Godly are.

Dauids

Pſal. 21.7. *Davids* caſe: *All they that ſee me laugh me to ſcorne. They ſhoot out the lip, they ſhake the head, ſaying, he truſted in God,* &c. And againe,

Pſal. 69.12 *They that ſate in the gate ſpake againſt me, and the drunkards made ſongs of me.*

Iob 30.1. This was *Iobs* caſe, *They that are younger then I mocke me.* This was the caſe of the Prophet *Eſay,*

Iſa. 8.18. *Behold I and the children whom the Lord hath given me, are for ſigges and for wonders in Iſrael.*

Thus complaineth the Prophet *Ieremy, I am a derriſion daily, every one mocketh me.*

Ier. 20.7. And this was the complaint of the Apoſtles of Chriſt, *We are made a ſpectacle vnto the world, to Angels and to men: being defamed, we intreat; we are made as the filth of the world, and are the off-ſcouring of all things vnto this day.* And in the Catalogue of

1. Cor. 4.9. 13. thoſe

those worthies the Apostle makes mention of, whom the world was not worthy of; this was part of those trials and sufferings they vnderwent for Christs sake: *Others were tried by cruell mockings, and scourgings*, &c. And indeed why should any thinke this strange? do but consider;

First, the naturall disposition that is in wicked men, who are by nature giuen to hate God and his truth, to hate godlinesse, yea and all that make profession thereof. This was the condition of the *Colossians* before their calling: they *were enemies vnto God*. And that which the Apostle Saint *Iohn* obserueth of cursed *Cain*, is true in some measure of euery wicked man: *Cain was of that wicked one, and slew his brother, and wherefore slew he him? because his owne workes were euill, and his brothers*

Reas. 1.

Col. 1. 21.

1. Ioh. 3. 12.

brothers righteous: yea the very pietie, zeale, godlineſſe, and vnblameable conuerſation that is in the righteous, is not the leaſt cauſe wherfore wicked men are ſo wrathfully diſpleaſed with them: their owne deeds being euill, and they louing darkneſſe more then light, hence is it that they hate the children of the light: *Ye are chaſen out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.* Ioh. 15. 19. Whereas *if ye were of the world, the world would loue her owne.*

2 Secondly, conſider againe the malice and policie of Sathan herein, who ruleth and raigneth in the children of diſobedience, who bloweth the coales, and by all meanes poſſible maintaineth this oppoſition, as knowing that himſelfe ſhall bee the gainer thereby. For,

1. Hereby wicked men are brought

brought to a greater measure and degree of wickednesse and hardnesse of heart, and so hasten their owne destruction.

2. By this meanes to breake off (if it be possible) the weake Christian from this godly course; by the manifold crosses and afflictions that Sathan layes in the way of such, and by the which many thousands are discouraged.

3. At the least, to stagger the best in their holy walking, that they may not so chearfully go on in their Christian course, so constantly and so chearfully as otherwise they might.

Thirdly, the Lord will haue it so, that his owne people may be tried, *Others were tried by mockings*, &c. And thus will the Lord haue the faith, patience, constancie, and obedience of his seruants, made manifest vnto others to the 3 Heb.11.36

praise and glory of his owne grace, and the incouragement of others. *Behold the deuill shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried, and ye shall haue tribulation ten dayes. Be thou faithfull vnto death, and I will giue thee a crowne of life.*

Reu. 2.10.

Vse I. Now then seeing this hath beene the state of the Fathers, the Prophets, Apostles, yea the Lord Iesus Christ himselfe to be reuiled and mocked by others, we may not thinke it strange if the same befall any of vs. Nay seeing Christ suffered himselfe to bee mocked for our sakes, what are we that we should disdaine to be mocked againe for his sake? we ought rather with the disciples to reioyce that the Lord should account vs worthy of that honour, to suffer for him, resting assured that *our light afflictions which are but for a mo-*

Acts 5.41.

ment

ment, worketh for vs a farre more excellent and eternall weight of glory.

Secondly, this may admonish euery childe of God to looke vnto themselues, that they suffer not as euill doers: for then the shame of the world, and the reproaches of the wicked, yeeld no true comfort. *For what glory is it* (saith the Apostle) *if when ye are buffeted for your sinnes, ye take it patiently*: But if when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. To suffer wrongfully, and to suffer for Christ and his truth sake, shall neuer go vnrewarded with God. *Blessed are ye* (saith our Sauiour) *when men reuile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of euill against you falsly for my Names sake: Reioyce and be glad, for great is your reward in heauen.*

2

1. Pet. 2. 12 Vers. 20.

Mat. 5. 11. 12.

How to beare the reproches of the wicked with comfort.

1

And to the end we may beare this burden of reproach and disgrace for Christ the more easily, consider we,

First, the more reproaches thou shalt vndergo by the wicked, the more conformable thou art vnto Christ, and that it is a good signe there is some grace within that soule that hath procured thee so much enuie from Sathan, and from the wicked world.

2

Secondly, if as now we become vile and contemptible in the world, we should bee so in Gods account, how miserable were a Christian aboue all others, inasmuch as he is sure to meete with hard entertainment here. But here is his happinesse, that God seeth not as man seeth; but the more contemptible and vile we are in the eyes of the world, the more glorious and excellent in Gods account. Third-

Thirdly, if we ſtartle at a mock or reproach for Chriſt, what would wee do when the *Chaine* were faſtened to our *leggues*, and we carried to the ſtake? this is not to reſiſt vnto bloud. 3. Heb. 12. 3.

Fourthly, howſoeuer wicked men now reuile and reproach thee, this *is* their day, now they haue their time; there is a time comming, when the Lord will bring forth thy righteouſneſſe as the day, when wicked men ſhall be put to ſilence, when thy *faith*, *patience*, *zeale*, and *ſincerity* ſhall be found vnto praiſe and glory in that day. 4.

On him.

Chriſt now in miſery and in great diſtreſſe, this *Impenitent* doth adde vnto his ſufferings, which added greatly vnto his

sinne. *A man* (saith *Iob*) *in affliction should be comforted:* Thus should hee rather haue pitied Christ, and put vnder his shoulder at this time, to haue holpen him, to haue borne this burthen.

Luk. 23. 27. Certaine women meeting Christ carrying his owne Crosse towards *Golgotha*, pitied his case and wept, and lamented for him.

Heb. 13. 3. It is the Apostles rule, *Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them.* He should rather haue beene another *Simon* of *Cyren*, by comforting him being afflicted. But this man is so farre from ministring vnto Christ any comfort at this time, as that he addeth to his sorows, which added likewise greatly vnto his sin. Note hence,

Doct. 2. It is a great sin to adde affliction to the afflicted. That it is a great and a haynous sinne to adde affliction to the afflicted. That this was the case and condition of the Lord Iesus at this

this time, the Euangelists make it most cleare. First by the railings and reproachings of the chiefe Priests and Elders, saying vnto Christ at this time, *He saued others, himselfe he cannot saue: If he be the King of Israel, let him come downe and we will beleeue in him. He beleeued in God, let him deliuer him, if he will haue him.* Mat. 27. 39. 40.

Secondly, of the Passengers, *Ah thou that destroyedst the Temple, and buildst it in three dayes, saue thy selfe. If thou be the Sonne of God, come downe from the Crosse.* Mar. 15. 29

Thirdly, of this Impenitent Thiefe now crucified with Christ, *If thou be the Sonne of God, saue thy selfe and vs.* All which, no doubt, added greatly to the sufferings of Christ, now at this time of his Passion.

And indeed amongst all other

the sinnes of this Impenitent Thiefe, this was not the least, that he should thus at this time burthen the Lord Iesus with his reproaches, which was sorely prest downe before. And for this, let the *Moabites* bee an example vnto vs, whom the Lord grieuously plagued for this sinne: Ier. 48.26. 27. *Moab shall be in derision, for didst thou not deride Israel, as though he had been found amongst theeues?* The meaning is, The Lords people being in aduersitie and sore distresse, *Moab* was so farre from comforting them, as that they derided them in their misery. And this the Lord complained of by his Prophet against the Shepheards of Israel, that they had not Ezek. 34. 2. 4. *strengthened the weake*, nor *healed the sicke, nor bound vp the broken*. And this, no doubt, added much to *Dauids* griefe, that at the time

time of his banishment and exile by *Absolom*, his rebellious and most vnnaturall sonne, his enemies concluded against him thus, *There is no helpe for him in his God.* This was the sinne of cruell *Pharaoh* and his people, exercising all manner of cursed cruelty against the Lords people. Whose afflictions, when none else would pitie, the Lord layed them to heart, and sent them deliuerance. Psal. 3.2. Exod. 3.

And this was the great fault of *Eliphaz*, *Bildad*, and *Zophar*, *Iobs* three friends, that beholding *Iob*, this seruant of God, so sorely oppressed with misery, instead of supporting him vnder that heauy burthen, they charged him for an hypocrite, and so added vnto his sorrowes. And hence is it that *Iob* reproues them, saying, *A man in affliction ought to be comforted* Iob 6. 14.

forted of his neighbours. And for this very cause the Lord curſed the men of Meroz, for that the Lords people being in miſery and diſtreſſe, they came not in to their ſuccour. And our Sauiour ſheweth how he will charge the wicked at the laſt day, with this very ſinne, when he wil ſay vnto them,

Mat. 25.40 *I was hungry, and ye fed me not: naked, and ye cloathed mee not: ſicke, and in priſon, and ye viſited me not.* All which teſtimonies, as a cloud of witneſſes, conclude this truth, that to adde to the miſeries of the afflicted, and not to yeeld them comfort in time of diſtreſſe, is a grieuous ſinne. And there is reaſon for it. For,

Reaſ. 1. Firſt, it makes the burthen of a mans ſorrows by this meanes the more heauy. For indeed there is nothing more grieuous vnto our natures, nor can go nearer the

heart

heart of man in time of affliction, then for a man to perceiue himselfe to be despised, and cast off of others. And no doubt it was not the least of those sorrowes that wounded the heart of our blessed Sauiour, that hee could say as it was prophesied of him before, *I am a worme and not a man, a shame of men, and the contempt of the people. All they that see me haue me in derision*, &c. And thus also complaineth the Church in time of misery, *Our soule is filled with the reproach of the wealthy, and with the despitefulnesse of the proud.* Psa.22.6.7

Secondly, it is a grieuous sinne to adde affliction to the afflicted, because by this meanes we helpe to strengthen Sathans temptations, who seeks by all meanes possible to ouerwhelme the righteous in the gulfe of their present sorrows. 2

sorrowes. For Sathan is ready still to take aduantage of these times, when the godly are most perplexed, and reiected of all, to solicite them with dangerous temptations euen to dispaire, and no doubt but the Apostle Saint *Paul* was wel acquainted with Sathans subtilty herein; and therefore commands the *Corinthians* to comfort the *incestuous* person, & why so? *lest he be swallowed vp of too much heauinesse.*

1 Cor. 2. 7.

3 Thirdly, wee doe not know what need we our selues may haue in time to come, there is none of Gods seruants cast so low, in misery and sorrow, but we our selues are liable vnto the same, haue deserued the same, and why then should we not feare, and expect it? Now who would not be comforted in time of sorrow? Surely it is Gods mercy to his people in

times

times of affliction, that they suffer not alone, but haue others sympathizing with them, who are ready to put vnder their hands, & by their godly counsels, comforts, prayers and supplications, are ready to help to beare vp the burthen that they sinke not.

And indeed, wee often finde this rule of our Sauiour verified amongst men, *with what measure wemete to others, the very same shall be measured to vs againe.* If we shew that godly and Christian charity to comfort others in their distresse, wee shall not our selues want comfort in our greatest need, as wee shall see in the penitent Theefe hereafter. Mat.7.3.

If then in times of our afflictions, the Lord hath giuen vs the comforts of our Christian brethren, who haue laboured to support vs in loue, and haue comforted *Vse 1.*

ted vs ouer al our ſorrowes, it may teach vs to magnifie the name of our good God, and to eſteeme of our afflictions the more light and burden ſo much the more eaſie, & learne to beare them the more patiently, ſeeing the Lord hath layd his hand farre more heauy vpon others, as Chriſt here, and moſt iuſtly might haue layd his hand as heauy vpon vs.

2 Secondly, it may admoniſh vs that wee labour more and more with our ſelues, & with our owne hearts, that we get this Chriſtian affection towards our brethren in time of miſery, that wee may *mourne with them that mourne*, and be like affected one towards another, and the rather for that it declares a man to bee a liuely member of that myſticall body, whereof the Lord Ieſus Chriſt is the head, who is affectionate to-

wards

wards all his members. Whereas the want of this affection argueth that wee are dead members, and were neuer truely ingrafted into that body.

And last of all, in Christ thus raised vpon and reproached by this wicked man, we may see vnto what a neere ebbe the Lord brings his people many times here in this life, namely to be left destitute of all worldly helpe and comfort, & yet notwithstanding remaine still highly in Gods fauour: wee may see this in *Iob*, whom the Lord brought full low euen to the dunghill, a man notwithstanding highly in Gods fauour. We may see this in *Dauid*, in the *Prophets*, Apostles, yea the Lord Iesus Christ himselfe is made here, the obiect of wicked mens malice. And this the Lord doth,

Doct. 3. God brings his childrē often to a low ebbe in this life.

Iob. 2. 8.

Ps. 3.

To

Resp. To magnifie his owne mercy, and to endeare his helpe and releefe to his people, when there is none elſe to deliuer, *I create comfort*, ſaith the Lord by his Prophet. As all things were created of nothing, ſo when there is no ſeeing ground of comfort, God createth it out of nothing, that his grace may bee the better welcome to his afflicted children.

Vſe 1. Which ſhould teach vs, to make the Lord our friend, who is our *ſtrong helpe, who will not breake the bruſed reede nor quench the ſmoking flax*; Whoſe nature is to pitty men in miſery, & hath promiſed to bee with his ſeruants in ſix troubles and in ſeauen, and neuer to leaue them nor forſake thē. Heb. 13.

2. Secondly, this may be a ground of patience vnto vs, when miſeries are vpon vs: Though our miſeries are vpon vs as the *Ar-*

mites,

with, yet as Elisha said, *there are more with vs then against vs.* Vpon him therefore let vs labour to fasten all our hope, and then notwithstanding our miseries, wee shall finde comfort, and let vs know, that it were ill for vs that we had no indgements, except it were so well with vs to deserue none.

VERSE 39.

If thou bee Christ saue thy selfe and vs, *Text.*

THIS *Theefe* was not acquainted with the nature of Christs Kingdome, which was not *earthly*, as hee thought but *spirituall*; he thought that Christ had spoken blasphemy, because he had called himselfe the Son of God; 4. In what manner.

God, yea and as he conceiued all those miracles that Christ had wrought, were not wrought by his owne power, but by the power of the deuill. And because he did not deliuer himselfe from the Crosse, hee concluded that he could not bee the Son of God. But that could Christ haue done at this time, but hee would not, because his time was now come to suffer. So that if Christ had now come downe from the Crosse, it would not haue proued him so much to bee the Son of God, as being *dead*, and *buried*, to raise himselfe from the dead.

For he was declared *mightily* to bee the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead, it was a more glorious worke to raise vp *Lazarus* from the dead; then if Christ had restored him to health, being but sick on his bed.

So

So in Christ, it was a more glorious work to raise vp himself from the graue, then if hee had saued himself aliue, being on the Crosse.

But yet notwithstanding all his diuine preaching and glorious miracles that Christ wrought by the which hee declared himselfe *mightily* to bee the Son of God, this impenitēt wretch ouerlooks them all, and calleth the truth of God into question, *If thou be Christ?* where wee haue first of all to obserue.

How great and how dangerous the sin of *infidelity* is, it ouerlooks all the grounds of a mans saluation, such as are Gods *power*, *wisdom*, *goodnesse*, *mercy*, &c. and calls them all into question. No doubt this man had heard of the fame of Christ, & of those glorious miracles that he had wrought: the fame of Christ went far and neere,

I Calling the truth into question.

Doct. I. Infidelity a dangerous sin.

he could not be ignorant that he was reputed the Sonne of God; for so saith he to Christ: *If thou be the Sonne of God.* And yet notwithstanding all these, his heart is shut vp in *vnbeleefe*, by which meanes the way that leadeth vnto life and saluation, through faith in Christ, through his infidelitie is barred vp against him. This was the sinne of our first parents, albeit God had said, *Ye shall not eate thereof, neither shall ye touch it, lest yee dye.* As the woman confessed to Sathan, yet for want of faith to beleeue the truth of Gods word, they eate the forbidden fruite, and so brought Gods wrath vpon them and their posteritie.

Gen. 3. 3.

This was the sinne of the *Israelites*, who albeit they had experience of Gods power and might in bringing them out of Egypt

and that miraculous deliuerance shewed them from the cruelty of *Pharaoh*, and that through the Red-sea: yet vpon euery light occasion called they still Gods loue, power, goodnesse and mercy into question, as if they had no experience at any time of the same. Thus then they murmure in the wildernesse, when they wanted meate, *Can God prepare a table in the wildernesse? Can he prepare flesh for his people?* Howsoeuer this people were guiltie of many sinnes, yet this, this sinne of *Infidelitie* was that sinne that in so speciall a manner prouoked the Lord to wrath against them; for so saith the Text: *Therefore the Lord heard and was angry, and the fire was kindled in Iacob, and also wrath came vpon Israel.* But what might be the reason thereof? *Because they beleeued not in God,*

Numb. 11. 18 19. Psal. 78. 19. 20.

Psa. 78. 21.

Vers. 22.

and trusted not in his helpe. And albeit the Lord sware vnto their Fathers, that he would giue vnto them the Land of *Canaan*: yet of all those that came out of the land of Egypt, and had seene his miracles vpon *Pharaoh* and his people, there did not one of them aboue the age of twenty yeares, come into that good Land. What might be the cause? Surely they stood guiltie before the Lord of many sinnes, such as were their idolatry, whoredome, &c. but aboue all other, that which the Lord was most of all displeased at, was their *infidelity*, for so saith the holy Ghost, *They could not enter in because of vnbeleefe.* This appeares likewise in the example of that Prince in *Samaria*, that would not beleeue the Prophet touching the great plentie which he prophecied should be in *Samaria*,

Deut. 1.8.

Heb. 3.19.

2. Kin. 7. 1.

ria, that a measure of fine flouure should be sold for a shekel in the gate of Samaria: His infidelitie did not onely deprive him of the fruition of the plenty, but was punished with the losse of his life. *For the people trode him in the the gate, and he dyed.* 2.King.7. 20.

Another memorable example hereof we haue recorded by the Euangelist, That when our Sauiour came to the City of *Nazareth*, there to preach, and to shew his power, the Text saith, *Hee could do no great works there*: and what might be the reason, *Because of their vnbeleefe.* The *Infidelity* and vnbeleefe that was amongst them, did after a sort binde the hands of our blessed Sauiour, that he could not do the good he desired amongst them. Mark. 6.5. Vers. 6. Mat. 13.58

This doctrine might bee further insisted vpon by the exam-

ples of Gods iudgements vpon his owne children, as the *Israelites* who for this sinne were *broken off*. Of *Zachary*, that doubting of the Lords promise by his Angell, that *Elizabeth* his wife should beare him a Sonne, was for this sinne of his smitten dumbe. By all which testimonies and examples it is most cleare, how hainous this sinne of *Infidelity* is. And it must needs be so.

Rom. 11. 20

Luk. 1. 20.

Reas. 1. First, because after a sort is put the lye vpon God, his word, and promises, and to likewise vpon all those excellent attributes of his, such as are, his power, wisedome, truth, goodnesse and mercy; an heart fraught with *infidelity* credits none of these. *He that believeth not God, hath made him a liar.* Then the which, what greater disgrace can be put vpon any, then to giue him the lye?

1. Ioh. 5. 10.

Secondly,

Secondly, the sinne of *Infidelity* is a mother sinne, and is the cause of many other euils and enormities in the hearts and liues of men. And hence is it that the Apostle ioynes these two together, an *euill heart*, and an *heart of vnbeleefe*, as the *cause*, and the *effect*; for as Faith is a mother grace, and produceth feare, loue, obedience, &c. So where infidelitie beares sway, there must needs all manner of impietie raigne and abound. 2

Heb. 3.12.

This serues first of all to let vs see in what a cursed and miserable estate and condition, all wicked and vngodly men are in, that are void of faith, and full of *infidelity*. Such men can neuer please God in any thing they take in hand. For, *Whatsoeuer is not of faith is sinne.* And *without faith it is impossible to please God.* Their hearing *Vse* 1.

Rom. 14.23
Heb. 11.6.

hearing of the Word, receiuing of the Sacraments, prayer, and the like holy duties are all abomination to the Lord, when they are not done by a beleeuer. To an vnbeleeuing heart, neither the power of Christs merits, nor the infiniteneſſe of Gods mercy, Word, Sacraments, can neuer profit, but all tend to the deſtruction, and the increaſe of the condemnation of an vnbeleeuer.

2 Secondly, ſeeing that this ſinne of *Infidelitie* aboue all other ſinnes is ſuch a ſtumbling blocke in our way, ſtrikes at God and all his attributes, and ſtames to put the lye vpon them all, makes the Word, Sacraments, prayer, and all other the ordinances of God, vnprofitable vnto a man; O how ſhould this prouoke euery man, euen as he tendereth the ſaluation of his owne ſoule, to take heed

of this sinne. O vnhappie if was this vnto this poore man, that shut vp heauen gates against him. Take we heed of that thought at any time that shall seeme to question the truth of Gods word. But rather let vs labour daily more and more to haue our hearts confirmed against all diffidence and distrust of God.

Saue thy selfe and vs. Text.

These words were spoken in an ironicall and taunting manner, after the manner of the chiefe Priests and people, who mocked our Sauiour likewise at this time, saying, *if thou be the King of Israel, come downe from the Crosse.* 2 Scoffingly desiring deliuerãce Mar.15.29

And againe: *He saued others, himselfe he cannot saue.* This impenitent thiefe trades in their steps, and followes their example, and Mat.27.39

mock-

mocketh Christ likewise. Whence we may note:

Doct. 1. Euill examples dangerous.

First, how powerfull examples are with men, either to the imitation of that which is good, or euill. As men meete together, vsually they traffique together, by their interchange of words and manners, whether they be godly or wicked. But especially of great men, and men in authoritie, their examples being euill, hurt many. As the *Chiefe Priests*, and *Elders* here, they giuing such an euill example in mocking Christ, no maruell though the common people do the same likewise. We may see this in *Herod*, in this Chapter, when he began to offer indignity to our Sauiour, the *Men of warre*, yea all his traine were ready to do the same. Let *Ahab* but declare himselfe no friend to *Micha*, the Lords Prophet, and *Zidkijah*

1. Kin. 22. 24.

the

the Kings Chaplaine, will dare to smite him on the face. So true is that of *Solomon, If a Prince hearken to lyes, all his seruants are wicked.* We may see this by daily experience, that they that associate themselues with those that are vile and sinfull, sauour of their manners, and are made worse by them. *He that walketh with the wise, shall be the wiser. But he that vseth the company of fools shall be the worse.* Yea Gods people themselues, when they haue liued in sinfull places, and haue had to do with wicked persons, they haue receiued some blurs and blots of their filthinesse, and haue not escaped free from their sinne, but haue made good that of *Solomon, He that toucheth pitch shall be defiled.* We may see this in *Ioseph*, who liuing a while in the Court of *Pharaoh*, how quickly had he learned

Pro. 29. 12

Pro. 13. 20

Eccl. 33.

learned to sweare, *By the life of Pharaoh.* And we know that it was in the high Priests Hall, and amongst the high Priests seruants, that *Peter* had learned to curse and to sweare.

And for this cause the Lord giues that straight charge vnto his seruants concerning *Babylon.* Rev. 18. 4. *Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sinnes, and that ye receiue not of her plagues.* And so likewise when the people of *Israel* were to come into the Land of *Canaan* amongst an idolatrous people, the Lord chargeth them after this manner, Exod. 23. 32. *Thou shalt make no couenant with them, nor with their gods, neither shall they dwell in thy land, lest they make thee sinne against me.* And Deut. 7. 2. againe, *Thou shalt make no marriages with them: Thou shalt not giue thy daughter to his sonne, nor*

take

take his sonne to thy daughter: And the reason is giuen, *For they will cause thy sonne to fall away from me.* And how true the word of the Lord herein was, the euent made it manifest; for they, neglecting the Lords commandement, the Psalmist saith, *Were mingled amongst the heathen, and learned their works.* Psa.106.35

And hence is it that when the Prophet *Dauid* would approue himselfe vnto God faithfully to serue him, he declareth the same by this, that he *was A companion of all them that feared him, and kept his precepts.* Psal.119.63 And againe, *Away from me ye wicked, I will keepe the commandements of my God.* Psal.119.115. Intimating thereby, as it may easily be gathered, that *Dauid* could not set himselfe as he should to the performance of any good duty, so long as any wicked men

men were about him. So that it is a moſt cleare truth, that the examples of wicked men are very powerfull to draw men into ſinne, and by being companions of ſuch to bring them to partake of their euill wayes. And the Reaſons I take to be theſe.

Reaſ. 1. Firſt, that naturall diſpoſition that is betwixt this nature of ours and ſinne, there is no two things in nature, wherein there is a more neare coniunction, as betwixt fire and gunpowder, then this ſinfull and corrupt nature of ours and ſinne; it is ready to take fire with the leaſt ſparke, the leaſt occaſion, or prouocation, eſpecially the examples of others, are dangerous excitements vnto euill.

Vſus mouent maxime.

2 Secondly, there is a diſpoſition in wicked men to make others like themſelues; yea they count it their maſter-peece to corrupt

all

all that haue fellowship with them, that their owne sinnes may not appeare so exceedingly sinfull vnto others. And this our Sauiour obserueth to be that height of wickednesse in the *Pharisees*, that *They would compasse sea and land to make one Proselyte: and when he was made, they would make him twofold more the childe of hell then themselues.* Mat. 23. 15

Thirdly, there is a kinde of infectious nature in the words and actions of wicked men, which as the Apostle saith, *Eate like a gangrene.* And indeed the soules of men are more subiect to the contagion of sinne, then their bodies can to any manner of disease. 3.

This serues then in the first place iustly to blame and condemne such as are careless of their company, that can be as familiar and merry in the company of *Vse 1.*

Atheists, Papists, yea be they as prophane as *Esau*, all is one to them, as if there were no danger at all to bee corrupted by such, and indeed such men need not Sathan to tempt them, for they will tempt themselues. Which they do, whilest without a calling they remaine in the company of wicked men. Such men proclaime to the world that they make no conscience of sinne, for did they, would they not then make conscience of the occasions of sinne?

2 Secondly, let this serue to admonish euery man in the feare of God, to decline, as much as possible they may, the company of wicked men. *My sonne* (saith *Solomon*) *walke not in the way with them, refraine thy foot from their path*; Yea if it lye in our power to remoue them, and to banish them our presence. So *Dauid*, *I will not*

Pro. 1. 15.

Psal. 101.

suffer

suffer any euill person to abide in my house: He that telleth lyes shall not tarry in my sight. Many wise men, by such haue beene seduced; many strong men by them haue fallen; and many who began to walke in the wayes of godlinesse, haue by this meanes fallen backe againe, when they haue beene daily conuersant with those who haue beene enemies to godlinesse.

Quest. But may we not sometimes, and vpon some occasion, bee in the company of such?

Ans. Yes, these cautions being considered.

First, that we rush not into their company without a calling; for it is lawfull to hold commerce with them in the affaires of this life, for otherwise wee must out of the world.

Secondly, that we be not silent

at ſinne, but by one meanes or o-
ther, at the leaſt by a frown in our
browes, ſhew our diſlike at their
wayes.

Thirdly, that we get our hearts
to be grieued within vs for their
ſinnes, as *Lot* was with the Sodo-
mites, *Whoſe righteous ſoule was vexed with their abhominations.*

Text. *If thou be Chriſt, ſaue thy ſelfe and vs.*

Secondly, we may note further
in this Impenitent Theefe, that
ſcoffingly deſiring deliuerance by
Chriſt;

Doct. 2 Propertie of a wicked man to be giuen to mocking. That it is a note of a wicked
and graceleſſe man to be giuen to
mocking, and that ſuch a one is
come to a wonderfull height of
ſinne. And ſurely this is ſuch a
kinde of ſinne that is found for
the

the moſt part in the moſt dangerous and deſperate wicked men. *Cain* was a mocker: *Iſmael* was a mocker, notorious wicked men. The *Athenians mocked Paul, What will this babler ſay?* The Scribes and Phariſees notorious wicked men, theſe mocked Chriſt, *Hayle King of the Iewes.* The Iewes mocked the Apoſtle *Peter*, when he had preached the word of life vnto them, ſaying, *Theſe men are full of new wine.* *When the wicked man commeth* (ſaith *Solomon*) *then commeth reproach.* None ſcoffed more at *Dauid*, then the *Abiects*: and the *Drunkards* made ſongs of him. The children of Bethel mocked the Prophet, ſaying, *Go vp thou bald head.* This was the complaint of the Prophet *Ieremy*: *O Lord* (ſaith he) *I am in deriſion daily, euery one mocketh me.* And

Gen. 9. 22.
Act. 17.
Mat. 26. 68
Act. 2. 13.
Prou. 18. 3
Pſal. 25. 15
2. King 2. 23.
Ier. 20. 7.

this was the complaint of that holy man *Iob*, speaking of the most notoriously wicked of his time, saith that he was their songe, their daily talke, yea they spared him not to spit him in the face. And when the Prophet *Dauid* comes to speake of that growth in sinne, in wicked men, as it were the top of all iniquitie and impietie, hee describeth the wicked thus: *He sitteth in the seat of the scorner.* By all which testimonies it may appeare that it is a cleare euidence and demonstration of a notorious wicked man, to be giue ouer to this sinne of mocking. And it must needs be so. For,

Iob 30.1.9. 10.

Psal.1.1.

Reas. 1. First, we see men commonly mocke at *Fooles* and folly, now in what esteeme are the godly with the wicked, but as fooles? and religion it selfe, what is it esteemed but as *Foolishnesse*, to those that

1.Cor,1.21.

are

are naturall men? and therefore it is no maruell though the godly be contemned and reproached, and their best performances scorned and derided.

Secondly this proceeds from the abundance of malice and corruption that is in the hearts of wicked men: for so saith Christ, *O generation of vipers, How can ye being euill speake good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.* Cursed language, euill speaking, mocking and reproachfull speeches is the naturall language of wicked men, being led by the spirit of darknesse: their words and actions must needs be sinfull and wicked, that must tend to vtter darknesse. 2 Mat. 12.34

This may teach vs then how to iudge and esteeme of such men as are giuen ouer to this sinne, *Vse* 1.

namely, as notoriously wicked: for when *Dauid* speakes of the degrees of sinne and sinners, by a gradation, the *Seat of the scorner*, he placeth in the last place as worst of all. And yet it is lamentable to how many wee haue amongst vs, that glory in the dexteritie of their wit, and thinke it their praise that they can breake some wittie iest on others, that may cause laughter; but such do but *glory in their shame*. Let such be admonished in time, to breake off this sinne by repentance, for seldome or neuer doth it escape the reuengefull hand of God. What became of *Cain*, *Ismael*, the two and fortie youngsters, that mocked *Elizeus* the Prophet? What became of this desperate malefactour that mocked Christ? Yea, let it be obserued, and wee shall finde it true, that such as haue

Psal. 1. 1.

haue beene guilty of this sinne, that haue beene mockers of the Word of God, of Gods Ministers, and of the professors of the Gospell, whether some token, or other of Gods vengeance hath not ouertaken them, euen here in this life, wherein the Lord doth vsually shew his indignation against this sinne.

Secondly, it may teach vs carefully to heed our selues, as to auoid all sinne, so especially this sinne of mocking, railing, and euill speaking, which the Lord in so speciall a manner hath made a marke and a brand of a wicked man. 2

And last of all, doe none but wicked men vse it? why then let vs not regard it, let vs not care how we are iudged by them that speake not out of iudgement, but malice: as they are masters of 3

their

their tongues, so let vs be masters of our cares, by the vse whereof we may learne to contemne contempt it selfe.

Text. (*Saue thy selfe and vs.*)

It is not the pardon of his sins that this Impenitent *Thiefe* desireth at Christs hands, but deliuerance from his temporall punishment; Sinne affects him not, but the punishment of sinne. Note hence,

Doct. 3. Wicked men are more troubled for their misery then their sinne

That wicked men in time of affliction are more troubled with the punishment, the effect of sin, then with sinne it selfe, the cause of punishment. They cry out, not against their sins, but against their punishment: *My punishment is greater then I can beare,* saith *Cain. Pray ye to the Lord that this plague may be remoued,* saith

Gen. 4.

Exod. 9.

Pharaoh

Pharaoh to *Moſes*.

And this we may ſee by experience daily of many that complaine of their miſeries, their croſſes, and afflictions; but neuer complaine of their ſinne, the cauſe of all. And whence is this? But from,

That doting reſpect which they beare to themſelues, which drowneth all the reſpect they ought to haue towards God. So that they looke not vpon God offended, but themſelues puniſhed; they looke not vpon their ſinnes, with an holy compunction, but vpon themſelues, with a fooliſh confeſſion; they looke not vpon the wronging of Gods Iuſtice, but the heauy effects of it; in reſpect whereof, the doore of their lips moues like a doore vpon ruſty hinges, with words of murmuring and complaining. *Reaſ.*

It

It may ſerue then for the triall of our owne hearts during the preſence of any affliction. It is a brutiſh thing to cry onely for want; the young rauens, the yong Lyons doe as much: wee muſt grieue principally for the withdrawing of Gods ſauour and countenance from vs, aboue all croſſes or loſſes, or any other outward miſery that can or doth betide vs. We muſt ſay as *Mephibo-ſeth* to *Dauid*, *Let Ziba take all the lands, it is enough that I ſee the Kings face.* A generous ſpirit, whoſe anceſtors were attainted, cares not ſo much for the reſtitution of his lands, but of his honour, of his bloud: So muſt it be with a Chriſtian, to be reſtored againe into Gods ſauour when wee haue ſinned, muſt bee the principall thing wee labour and ſeek after. Hitherto of the Impenitent Thiefe. VERSE

VERSE 40.

But the other rebuked him, saying, Doest thou not feare God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

HItherto wee haue heard the fearefull estate and condition of the Impenitent Thiefe, whose life as it was wretched and miserable, so was his death fearefull and damnable. Wherein we haue seene, that an euill life hath commonly attending it an euill death.

Now followeth in order the behauiour of the *Penitent Thiefe* at this time, that was crucified on the right hand of Christ, who is so farre from railing on Christ, by the example of the high Priest and Elders, or with his Fellow the Impenitent Thiefe, as that he iusti-

iustifieth Christ, becomes a witnesse of Christs innocencie, pleadeth his cause against his malitious enemies, reprooueth his fellow, and maketh a publicke profession of his owne faith, in a publicke auditory; that for his part, hee looked for life and saluation onely through this crucified Christ, whom the world contemned.

And herein indeed setteth forth the almighty power of Christ, both in respect of his *Deitie*, that was able thus to conuert a soule in so miraculous a manner without meanes; as also in respect of the power and efficacy of his death, and passion, which declareth it selfe most powerfully in the conuersion of this man, both in the powerfull worke of *Mortification*, and *vinification*, destroying and killing in him the works of the old man, and working

ing

ing in him true godlineſſe; The bleſſed fruits and effects whereof will appeare in the proceſſe of this Hiſtory.

(*But the other rebuked him.*)

Here we haue two malefactors both of them guiltie of one and the ſame ſinne, and both of them brought to one and the ſame ſhamefull death; yet the one left and forſaken of God, the other had this mercy ſhewed him, euen at the laſt to bee conuerted by Chriſt, and ſo ſaued. Note hence, firſt the generall inſtruction, and herein firſt,

That the Lord many times of his infinite mercy doth call home of the moſt deſperate and wretched offenders, and makes of great ſinners great Saints. Yea where there is true repentance, it is not the

Doct. 1. God can make of great ſinners great Saints.

the greatneſſe of ſinne, the numberleſſe number of our ſinnes, no not the long continuance in the ſame, that can any whit hinder vs of his mercy. Yea the Lord hath of all ſorts and conditions of men, ſome that belong vnto the election of grace, and appertaine vnto his glorious kingdome. Here wee haue an example of Gods merciſull dealing towards a moſt deſperate malefactour, one that had ſpent his life in a moſt deſperate courſe of ſinning; yet now at laſt brought home by repentance. What a fearefull eſtate was *Paul* in before his conuerſion, a grieuous perſecuter and bloud-ſuccour, yet called of God, and made an inſtrument of much good in his Church. *Rahab* an Harlot that came of curſed *Cain*, a Cananite, of a curſed people, of a curſed Citie, yet had mercie

Act. 9.

Heb. 11.

ſhewed

shewed her, and is honoured with a blessed memory in the Catalogue of Gods Saints for her admirable faith.

Ionas the Lords Prophet, how fouly and fearefully fell he: And so *Dauid* likewise in the matter of *Vriah*; yet vpon their repentance restored againe to fauour. *Mary Magdalene* branded with a brand of notable infamy, yet is she one of the witnesses of Christs glorious resurrection. And why should this seeme strange vnto any, since,

Ionas 1.

2. Sam. 11.

First, Gods gifts depend not vpon any respect to man, but are free on Gods part, and altogether vndeserued on ours. *I will haue mercy, on whom I will haue mercy.*

Reas. 1.

Rom. 9.

Secondly, the Lord herein will shew his owne power, wisedome, and goodnesse, that can when it pleaseth him, make his enemies

2

his friends; and such as haue been bloudly persecuters, blessed Preachers: and great and grieuous sinners on earth, blessed Saints in heauen.

3 Thirdly, the Lord doth it that he may magnifie his own mercy, by turning the crimosin dye of scarlet sins into the whitenes of snow; that where sinne hath abounded, grace might superabound.

Vse 1. This serues first of all to magnifie the wonderfull wisedome and goodnesse of God, who knoweth how to vse all things to his owne glory, and can when and where it pleaseth him, make of great sinners great Saints, and bring backe some from their wicked wayes, as a *Brand pluckt out of the fire.*

2 Secondly, we are taught hereby to esteeme of men as they are, not

not as ſometimes they were, according to their preſent condition, and not as in times paſt. The Apoſtle reckoning vp many horrible ſinnes that were committed amongſt the Corinthians, ſaith, *Such were ſome of you, but now ye are waſhed, now ye are ſanctified.* 1 Cor. 6. 11
It is indeed a common fault in the world, the fals and infirmities of Gods ſeruants are ſtill laid in their diſh, albeit they haue giuen good teſtimony of their hearty ſorrow and true repentance for the ſame. It is not ſeuen yeares that can weare out of minde ſuch a ſinne in ſuch a one; the world keepes Regiſters of ſuch mens faults, and as occaſion ſerueth, ſtill they ſhall heare of it. This is not the Lords manner of dealing with vs.

Thirdly, this may warne vs to take heed how we cenſure others, that yet wander and goe aſtray; 3.

thou doſt not know what is to come, a man that ſhould haue ſeene this penitent Theefe, how vile and ſinfull hee lined, euen to the end, that now a ſhamefull and miſerable death doth ouertake him, could not but haue thought him in a wretched and miſerable caſe. So likewiſe *Paul*, hee that ſhould haue ſeene him trotting and trudging vp and down from *Office* to *Office* to get his Commiſſions ſealed, to commit vnto priſon all that made profeſſion of Chriſt, could not but haue thought him with *Simon Magus*, to be in the gall of bitterneſſe. O but ſtay a while, this is one of Gods ſecrets that belongeth vnto him; he in whoſe hands are times and ſeaſons, hath his time to call home thoſe that belong vnto the election of grace, in the meane time wee may not paſſe a finall doome vpon any. In-

Indeed when I see a man liue a dissolute life, liuing in drunkennesse, swearing, vsury, &c. and in all manner of prophane courses, I may say this man is in the way to destruction, but yet there may bee a time wherein the Lord may call home such a one. I may come to a tree, and say, here is little fruit, or no fruit, or bad fruit, but I cannot say with Christ, *Neuer fruit grow on thee any more*, for God may shew mercy at last vpon their vnfained repentance. Luke 11.

And last of all this may bee a forcible motiue vnto vs, to moue vs vnto repentance, and to bee a spur in mens sides, to make them speedily to returne, and to seeke God: art thou a Drunkard, a Swearer, a prophane and beastly liuer, that hast spent thy time in vaine, prophane, and licentious courses, O behold here Gods 4

mercifull dealing now at last with this poore penitent vpon his repentance, the Lord doth freely receiue him againe to fauour.

Be not then out of heart, albeit thou art compassed about with many infirmities, wrong not the Lord, neither wrong thy owne soule, as to thinke it will bee too late for thee at last to returne vnto him. It was a curfed speech of a curfed wretch, *My sinne is greater then God can forgiue*: no, no, labour for a broken and a contrite heart, and the Lord in mercy will couer all thy sins.

Gen. 4.

And indeed this is the true vse we are to make of all the fals and infirmities of Gods children as they are recorded in Gods book, not to incourage vs in a course of sinning by their examples; but,

The true vse of other mens fals.

First, to put vs in minde of our weakenesse, for if *Dauid*, *Peter*, *Ionas*,

Ionas, and the like worthy stars in the Church haue fallen, whither shall we fall if the Lord shall but a little leaue vs vnto our selues.

Secondly, to keepe vs from de- 2
spaire, and therefore we can as ill spare the examples of their infirmities for our consolation, as the examples of their vertues for our imitation. What would become of vs had not the Lord left vs the examples of great and grieuous offenders, whom he hath againe receiued into fauour? surely wee should euen sinke vnder the burthen of those sins, whereof our own hearts cannot but condemne vs.

But the other rebuked him.

Wonderfull are the fruits of this Penitents repentance and faith, beleeuing, confessing, giuing

teſtimony of Chriſts innocency, rebuking his fellow, accuſing himſelfe, and hoping aboue hope in this crucified Sauiour, whom all the world contemned, and deſpiſed to finde life, the particulars whereof now follow in order.

But whence was this, that he is become ſuch a worthy *confeſſor*, excuſing Chriſt, and pleading his cauſe, who ſo lately before by his ſinfull and wretched life, had ſo diſhonoured him? No queſtion this proceeded from the Lords free grace and mercy ſhewed vnto him, giuing him to ſee his ſins, to be humbled for the ſame, and by a liuely faith to lay hold on Chriſt. It was Chriſt that had firſt looked on him with the eye of mercy, that had in him no merit, before he could behold his godhead now at this time vailed, and he himſelfe ſo much abaſed. He was by nature

nature in the ſame eſtate and condition with the other malefactor, guiltie of the ſame ſinne, ouertaken with the ſame puniſhment, and ſo had periſhed euerlaſtingly, had not the Lord Ieſus, of this *ſtone*, made a ſonne of *Abraham*, and framed his heart anew, making a difference through grace, where there was none by nature, for ſo was it his good pleaſure.

Doct. 2. All men are alike by nature, vntill God make a difference by grace.

The inſtruction we may learne hence, then, is this, that by nature there is no difference betwixt Gods children, and wicked men, vntill the Lord make the difference by grace; we are all hewed out of the ſame rocke that the vildeſt wretch and curſedſt *Canibal* was that euer breathed, vntill the Lord doe frame the heart anew, wee are all folded vp in the ſtate of nature, and are the *children of wrath*, as well as others.

Doe

Doe but consider what the Scripture speaketh of this particular, that *we are all by nature the children of wrath*, that *our father was an Aramite, and our mother a Hittite*; such as wee are indeed, without the couenant, *without God in this world*. Corrupted with iniquity from the wombe, *conceiued of vncleane seed*; yea, all the faculties of our soules, how are they depraued through this originall corruption.

Eph. 2.3. Ezec. 16.

Psal. 51.7. Iob 14.4.

The *vnderstanding* is blinde, *Hauing their vnderstandings darkened, being alienated from the life of God, through the ignorance that is in them.*

Eph. 4.18.

The *will* is froward and rebellious, *what I would, that doe I not, but what I hate, that I doe*, hauing not so much power to thinke that is good.

Rom. 7.15

And the same is true of our affections,

affections, which are likewise disordered, being set vpon transitorie things which profit not, and altogether auerse from heauenly things, inasmuch as the Apostle saith, *We are deprived of the glory of God*; Hauing in vs no inclination at all to any thing which is good; but rather indeed an inclination to all things that are euill. And in this miserable estate and condition doth the Lord finde vs, when he is pleased to call vs, as we may see in *Saul*, *Zacheus*, *Mary Magdalene*, this *penitent Theefe*, and of all the faithfull, it is God *Who worketh both the will and the deed, and that of his owne good pleasure. Who separateth thee* (saith the Apostle) *or who causeth thee to differ?* It is the Lord that makes this difference betwixt vs and wicked men. Yea wee shall finde the whole worke of *grace*, of

2.Cor.3.5.

Rom.3.23.

Gen.6.3.

Acts 9. Luke 19. Ioh. 7.

Phil. 2.13.

1.Cor.4.7.

of *Conuersion*, and saluation, to be wholly attributed vnto him: he is the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the first and the last, the beginning and the end, that is all in all, in the worke of our saluation.

1 Election.

First, *Election*, which is the ground & foundation of al grace, this comes from him: *Eph. 1. 5.* *Hee hath predestinated vs to bee adopted through Iesus Christ in himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.*

2 Vocation.

Secondly, vocation, and a Christian mans effectuall calling, outwardly by the word, and inwardly by the Spirit: this proceeds likewise from him, and his free and vndeserued grace and fauour alone. *2. Tim. 1. 9.* *He hath saued vs, and called vs with an holy calling;* *Gal. 1. 6.* *Not according to our workes, but according to his owne purpose and grace.*

Third-

Thirdly, Faith is the instrument or the hand, by the which we come to lay hold vpon and apply Christ and his righteousnesse vnto our owne soules in particular; and *without which we cannot please God.* Now from whence haue we this grace truly to beleeue? for *By grace ye are saued through faith, and that not of your selues, it is the gift of God.*

3. Faith. Heb. 11.6. Ephes. 2.8.

Fourthly, from him alone proceedeth what *will*, what *power*, or abilitie soeuer we haue, for any holy duty. *A new heart* (saith the Lord) *will I giue you, and a new spirit will I put into you. I will take away the stony heart out of your body, and I will giue you a heart of flesh: I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walke in my statutes.*

4. Obedience Ezek. 36. 27, 28.

Fifthly, to haue the Word and Sacrament effectuall vnto vs; this comes

5

comes from him, otherwise Paul may plant, and Apollo water, but all in vaine: *I have planted, and Apollo watered, but God gaue the increase.* 1. Cor. 3. 6.

6 Perseuerance.

Finally, the gift and grace of perseuerance to hold out in our Christian race vnto the end; this is likewise from him: *I will giue them one heart and one way, that they may feare me for euer. I will put my feare in their hearts, and they shal not depart from me.* Ie. 32. 4. 41. And *That God who hath begun the good worke, will performe it vntil the day of Iesus Christ.* So that it is he that is the *Alpha* and *Omega*, the first and the last, that is all in all in the matter of grace and saluation. Phil. 1. 6. 29. So as we must say with the Church, *O Lord thou hast wrought all our works for vs.* Isa. 26. 12.

Reas. 1.

And it must needs be thus. For First, God will haue the whole glory

glory of this worke of our conuersion and saluation, and none other. That all matter of glorying in our selues might bee taken away, and that we might say with the Psalmist, *Not vnto vs Lord, not vnto vs, but vnto thy Name giue the praise.* He will haue the glory of his owne worke, and the praise of his owne mercy, and will teach vs to go out of our selues, and to say with *Paul, By the grace of God, I am that I am.*

Secondly, we haue nothing of our owne, or within vs, that should moue the Lord to elect vs vnto life, or to adopt vs as sonnes, wee are miserable orphans, and haue naught else to plead vnto God to commiserate our misery; we are beggers, and destitute of all good things. Our penury is such as that we are faine to begge at his hands *Our daily bread*: he oweth 2

oweth vs naught, and they are but his owne gifts and graces giuen vnto vs, that he crowneth with glory.

Vse 1. This serues first of all to humble vs in the sense of our owne spirituall pouerty and misery, that we are by nature so poore, and blinde, and naked. No one thing can bee more effectuall to abate our pride, and to pricke that windie bladder of our selfe-loue, and selfe-conceitednesse, wherewith too many in the world are growne bigge withall, puffed vp with a vaine conceit of their own worth and merits; then the which what higher degree of sacrilege can there be, then to ascribe the least particular in this worke of conuersion to our deserts. No, no, let vs come vnto God, and say, *O Lord, righteousnesse belongeth vnto thee, but vnto vs shame.* Let

Poperie

Papery ſtand aloft, and preſume to diuide with God, in regard of their owne *Free-will*, works, *Merits*, and diſpoſition that is in their owne hearts to receiue grace. Far be it from vs ſo to doe, who are not able of our ſelues to thinke a good thought.

Secondly, this conſideration that God is all in all in the matter of grace and ſaluation: and that there is no difference by nature in any, vntill God make a difference by grace. This teacheth vs what to thinke, and how to carry our ſelues towards thoſe that are yet vncalled, and are yet in their ſins. Surely we ought to waite with patience, *Prouing if at any time God will giue ſuch repentance vnto life.* For ſeeing that our calling and conuerſion, yea euery good gift is from God, what are wee that haue receiued grace our

2

2. Tim. 2. 25.

ſelues, truly to repent and to be
leeue, that we ſhould iudge our
Brethren, As they are ſuch are we.
God hath ſhewed vs mercy, why
may not he that is rich in mercy
ſhew the like mercy vnto them
Let vs not then deſpaire of any,
but pitie them in their ſpiritual
miſeries. And if they bee fallen
downe, let vs put vnder our
hands, and helpe to raiſe them vp
againe. The Lord would have
this mercy ſhewed vnto the very
Oxe and *Aſſe* in the time of the
Law, being fallen vnder it hee
then; how much more to our
Brother. And we muſt pray for
the conuerſion of ſuch a one.
Prouing if at any time God will
giue them repentance vnto life.

3 Thirdly, ſeeing that God is all
in all in the matter of grace and
ſaluation: It ſhall be our wiſe-
dome to attend vpon the meanes
where

whereby grace comes to bee wrought, such as is the preaching of the Word especially, by the which ordinarily the Lord worketh repentance, for sinne, faith in Gods promises, and all other graces.

And last of all, that wee giue vnto God the praise of his owne grace, since that whatsoeuer good thing wee haue, it comes from him.

But the other rebuked him.

We haue here in this *Penitent* a patterne of a man, that maketh the right vse of his afflictions and troubles, they bring him nearer and nearer vnto God.

The Impenitent Thiefe, as we heard before, now falleth to the blaspheming of Christ, hauing his heart hardened, and his consci-

ence feared within him, hee becomes by his afflictions more and more desperately sinfull. But in this Penitent behold we the happie fruite of sanctified afflictions, they humble him, bring him to see the errours of his life past, set him on worke to confesse and bewaile his sinnes, and to be an earnest suter vnto Christ for mercy. Note hence,

Doct. 3. Afflictions of excellent vse to bring men to God.

That afflictions, when the Lord doth sanctifie the same vnto any, they make them better, and bring them nearer vnto God. I grant that afflictions in their own nature are euill, being the fruits of sinne, neither do they of themselues produce such happie effects in any; but then onely when the Lord worketh together with affliction by his Spirit, altering and changing the nature thereof, they become through Gods mercy

Non pena sed remedium delinquentis Ambros.

not

not a punishment but a remedy against sinne. This is confessed by *Dauid*, *Before I was afflicted I went astray, But now haue I kept thy Word*; Meaning indeed, that his afflictions had humbled him, and made him walke more awfully towards God. We may see this in *Hezekiah*, it was his affliction that humbled him, and caused him to recount with himselfe the errours of his life past. *Manasses* in prison and captiuity is brought home, that was like an vntamed heyfer, in time of prosperitie walked stubbornly and rebelliously against God. This truth is confessed by *Ephraim*, *Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised as a Bullocke vnaccustomed to the yoke, &c. After I was afflicted, I smote vpon my thigh, I was ashamed, and euen confounded, because I did beare the re-*

Psal. 119. 67.

Isa. 38.

Ier. 31. 18. 19.

preach of my youth. How often did the Lord cause the Israelites to be afflicted, and in the time of their affliction still they sought vnto God, and *cried* vnto him. And this is it the Lord further threatened against his people, *I will be vnto Ephraim as a Lion, and as a young Lion vnto the house of Iudah. I, even I, will teare, and go away, and none shall rescue. I will go and returne to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seeke my face, for in their affliction they will seeke me early.* I might instance this truth by diuers the like examples, as that of the *Prodigal*, who ranne riot a long time till his patrimony was nigh spent, and then happie famine, that caused him to looke home. And that hard-hearted *Iayler* that neuer thought hee could shew cruelty enough against

Psal. 107. 10. 13.

Hos. 5. 15.

Luk. 15.

Act. 16. 27

againſt thoſe innocent Lambs of Chriſt, it was the earth-quake that cauſed his ſoule-quake, and happy affliction that brought him home.

Neither is this a thing to bee wondred at, that ſanctified afflictions ſhould produce ſuch excellent effects in Gods people: for,

Firſt, in times of affliction we ſee how hopeleſſe and helpeleſſe all earthly and tranſitory things are. They doe not then profit in the euill day, they then proue but as the Reeds of Egypt, dangerous props to lean vpon, & then are we forced to goe out of our ſelues, and to ſeeke vnto God: for ſuch is the vanity of our hearts in times of miſery and diſtreſſe, that wee ſeldome thinke on God or his helpe, vntill all other humane helpe doe faile. So *Dauid, I looked on my right hand, and behold there was none that would know me, al refuge*

Reaſ. 1.

Pſal. 142. 4. 5.

failed me, and none cared for my soule, then cried I vnto the Lord, &c.

2 Secondly, the Lord to this end and purpose doth send affliction vnto his children, like a wise and skilfull Physitian, knowing what will worke best, and effect the soules cure; these cause the peaceable fruits of righteousnesse to all them that are exercised thereby.

Vse 1. Seeing then that afflictions are of such excellent vse to bring men to the sight of their sins, and to repentance for the same, what shall wee say then to those that haue beene afflicted, but no way bettered by their afflictions, this is a signe of a fearefull induration, and of a hard heart, and surely the case of such a one many times proues desperate, for the Lord commonly reserueth affliction and the rod of correction for the

last

last place, and if that fayle, the cure many times proues hopelesse and helpelesse; as siluer mettall being put into the fire, if nothing come out but drosse, it is found to be reprobate siluer: so men that haue beene fined in the furnace of affliction, if they be not humbled and brought home by the same, these will bee found reprobate men, and the Lord will cast such off as a desperate people, *Wherefore should ye be smitten any more? for ye fall away more and more*, saith the Lord. Ier. 6. Esay 1.

Secondly, wee haue others againe, that whilest the rod of God is vpon them, their thoughts are in the stocks, they dare not but speake and thinke humbly, as a Rogue, whilst he is in the stocks, speakes faire to the officers, but when he is out, miscals them againe. How many haue wee that 2

in

in time of affliction, will confesse their sinnes, cry downe their former euill wayes, and make vowes and couenants with God of new obedience like vnto *Pharaoh*, *I and my people are sinfull*. But when the rod of God is remoued, and they deliuered, with *Pharaoh* they returne againe vnto their old sins, like the dog vnto the vomit. These men vse repentance, as many a man vseth an old garment, which they put about them in time of a shower, but cast it away againe as soone as the weather is faire, or as many of our Papists vse our Churches, when they feare any trouble, they fly thither for shelter. Whereas the childe of God being once truely humbled, walkes the more holily and obediently before God for euer after.

Exod. 10.

3. Thirdly, seeing that it is not affliction of it selfe, but affliction sanctified

sanctified vnto a man, that produceth this happy fruit of conuersion vnto God. This should teach vs to be earnest with God in prayer, especially in times of affliction, that hee would be pleased to sanctifie the same vnto vs, and to second his corrections with the inward working of his owne spirit, whereby we may be moued to lay the same to heart, and to bring forth fruits worthy amendment of life.

But the other rebuked him.

The Euangelist setting out the conuersion of the penitent Theefe, sheweth his behauiour at this time, namely that hee did not onely leaue off his stealing as before, but is now exercised in the contrary good, rebuking his fellow, and seeking by all meanes possible

possible to stop him in a course of sinning; and herein will teach vs,

Doct. 4. To cease from euill is not sufficient, we must doe good.

That vnto true repentance, a cessation from euill is not sufficient, but we must doe good. In the worke of true repentance these two euer goe together. Psal. 34. 13. *Depart from euill, and doe good.* Dauid there ioyneth these both together. Esay 1. 17. So Esay the Prophet, *Cease to doe euill, learne to doe well.* And euen herein doth the Penitent shew the truth, and the fruit of his conuersion, according to that precept of the Apostle Paul, Eph. 4. *Let him that hath stolne, steale no more, but let him labour with his hands that which is good.* And this truth is further cleared by the practise and example of all Gods people, how vile and wretched soeuer they were in the time of their ignorance and vnregeneracy, yet being called

and

and conuerted, haue not onely left their former euill wayes, but put in practise the contrary vertues. See here the mercy and compassion of this poor Penitent, hee is now as rich in mercy and compassion towards the poore soule of his brother, as euer hee was before full of cruelty; yea, such was his compassion towards him, that hee seemeth to neglect himselfe, his present paine and misery that now he suffered, and fals to reproue his fellow, makes a hearty acknowledgement of their sinfulnesse, and the equitie of that their deserued punishment.

We may see this in *Paul*, whose conuersion kept him not onely from persecuting the Church as in times past, but set him on work to build vp the wals of that Sion hee had laboured before to pull downe. Acts 9.

The

Acts 16.27 The *Iaylor*, of a bloudy, cruell, and merciless tormentor of *Paul* and *Silas*, after the earth-quake and soule-quake, that heere came to see his sinne, and to be truely and throughly humbled for the same, how pitifull and compassionate became hee vnto them, washing their wounds, and intreating them with all kindenesse and loue.

Mat.3.10. This was the whole tenor of the Baptists Sermon, *Now is the Axe put to the root of the tree, euery tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, is hewen downe and cast into the fire.* He doth not say euery tree that is barren, or that bringeth forth euill fruit, *but euery tree that bringeth not forth good fruit.*

Iudg.5.23. *Meroth* is accursed, why? not for ioyning with the Midianites against Israel, but because the men of that city came not out to helpe the

the people of God. And our Saviour sheweth what his manner of proceeding shall bee with wicked and vngodly men in the last day; he will say vnto them, *Come yee blessed, &c.* not because they did not this or that euill, but because of this and that particular good, as the *feeding of the hungry, the cloathing of the naked, &c.* And this is indeed that speciall priuiledge that belongs vnto all the commandements of God, that where they are propounded negatiuely, they include an affirmatiue duty; and where they bee propounded affirmatiuely, they include likewise a negatiue part; and there is a curse imposed as well for the breach of the one, as the other. Gods righteous law being violated and broken, as wel by the omission of the good commanded, as by the committing of the

Mat. 25.

the euill condemned. And thus was the Fig-tree accurſed by our Sauiour, not becauſe it brought forth euill fruit, but becauſe it brought not forth good fruit.

Reaſ. 1. And the reaſon hereof may be taken from the nature of grace, and of true conuerſion, which frameth the heart anew, and cauſeth the ſame to bee fruitfull in euery good worke. Mat. 7. *Doe men gather grapes of thornes, or figs of thiſtles?* ſaith our Sauiour, implying that ſo long as the heart is ſinfull and corrupt, all manner of ſinfull and corrupt abhominations ſpring therehence: But when it comes once to be renewed and changed, *A good man* (ſaith he) *out of the good treaſure of his heart, bringeth forth good fruit.*

2 Secondly, it is the end of a Chriſtian mans election and vocation, that we ſhould *ſhew forth the*

the power of him that hath called vs out of darkenesse into a marueilous light. Eph. 1.

And surely this meetes with the vaine conceit that so many in the world are possest withall, that glory so much in their innocent and harmelesse conuersation, they doe no man wrong they say, and pay euery man their owne; and vpon this, men rest for saluation, but alas, this maist thou doe, and goe to hell when thou hast done. *Vse* 1.

The Pharisie was neither Adulterer, nor Drunkard, nor Rayler, nor Swearer, and yet far enough from the kingdome of heauen, all this is but a negatiue Christianity, which will not proue a man the childe of God. This Penitent Theefe did not rayle on Christ as the other did, but that was not sufficient to proue his conuersion; but wee see to the vtmost of his Luke 18.

power, he maintaineth Christs innocency, and labours to stop the current of sinne in others; few in these dayes proceed to this degree of Christianitie: to plead the cause of Christ against all gaine-sayers, and to stand out for the truth, to rebuke others, when they heare them blaspheme, or any way dishonour God, such cold friendship hath Christ and his truth now a dayes.

Men thinke they haue done enough if they ioyne not with the enemies of the truth, and runne not with others into the same excesse of riot; but the Lord will iudge him an euill man, that doth no good, and will in the last day proceed against such. *I was hungry and ye fed mee not, naked and ye clothed mee not, &c.* The very omission of that good men might haue done, shall be brought in as

evidence

euidence the last day to condemne the wicked. Oh that our ciuill honest men (as the world reputes them) would consider this, & lay this truth to heart, that in their outward ciuill conuersation they shew themselues but halfe Christians, and if they ioyne not the *doing of good*, to their *abstaining from euill*, they can neuer approue themselues for sound Christians before God, nor looke for the reward of the *iust* at last.

Secondly, if such as abstaine from euill, yet for want of doing good, shall perish and be damned the last, good Lord in what a miserable case are such men in, that are so farre from abstaining from euill, as that in their whole life and conuersation they lye wallowing and weltering in all manner of sinfull, vile, and vaine abhominations! If *These things* be

2

be done to the greene tree, what shall be done to the dry? If the not doing of good shall be punished so seuerely, where shall the vngodly and sinner appeare? *O consider this ye that forget God, lest I teare you in peeces, and there be none to deliuer you.*

Psal. 50.22.

3 And last of all, this may serue to admonish euery one in the feare of God, to the practice of well-doing, as that which will yeeld sound comfort vnto our owne hearts of our conuersion, that we are not hypocrites but such as in whom the worke of grace is truly wrought. This was it that supported *Iob*, against his friends accusation, that charged him for an hypocrite. *I was* (saith he) *a father vnto the poore, I restrained him not of his desire, nor caused the eyes of the widdow to faile. I did not eate my morsels*

Iob 31.16. 17.19.20.

alone, but the fatherleſſe did eate thereof, &c. I ſaw none periſh for want of clothing, nor any poore without couering: But their loynes bleſſed me, becauſe they were warmed with the fleece of my ſheepe. So *Hezekiah* being by the Prophet ſummoned to death, whereunto doth he retire himſelfe now for comfort but to this, his care & conſcience in his life to walke with God: *Remember Lord that I haue walked before thee in truth, and with an vpright heart.* And neuer let vs thinke that we haue profited aright in the ſchoole of Chriſt, or as we ſhould, till wee haue learned by well-doing to get the affirmatiue part of Chriſtianitie, as well as the negatiue, wherein we ſhall finde true comfort, and approue our ſelues as Chriſtians indeed. Iſa. 38.

(*But the other rebuked him.*)

Quest. But was not this Penitent Thiefe guiltie of the same fault with the other, how could hee then rebuke his fellow? He that rebuketh another, must not be guiltie of the same fault himselfe: For how shall hee that hath vncleane hands himselfe, wipe away the spots that are in another mans face?

Ans. This Penitent Thiefe though a sinner, yet repenting of his sin, is accounted no sinner, and therefore fit to reproue. *If the wicked* (saith the Lord) *will turne from his sinnes he hath committed, &c. All the transgressions that he hath done shall not be mentioned vnto him: But in the righteousnesse that he hath done he shall liue.* Ezek. 18. 23. 23.

And it is said of *Iosias*, that he 2. Kin. 23. 25.

first

first returned himselfe vnto the Lord, and then caused his Subiects to returne.

Or else it may bee answered thus. This Penitent thiefe though in other respects he were as faulty as the other: yet he was not guiltie of that sinne of mocking of Christ, the which he reproued in his fellow; and so in that respect was fit to reproue the other. And herein will teach vs, that

He that rebuketh another must not be guiltie of the same fault in himselfe. We must cast the first stone at our selues. *Thou that teachest another, teachest thou not thy selfe? Thou hypocrite* (saith our Sauiour) *first cast out the beame out of thy owne eye, so shalt thou see clearely to plucke out the mote out of thy Brothers eye. Iudah* hearing that his daughter in law *Thamar* was with childe, said,

Doct.5. He that rebuketh another, must not be guilty of the same fault himselfe. Ioh. 8.7. Rom.2.21. Mat.7.5.

Ge.38.24. *Let her be burned.* But when the pledges, the *ſeale*, the *cloake*, and the *ſtaffe*, were ſhewed, he knew himſelfe faultie, and then, She is *more righteous then I.* So that he that is guiltie himſelfe, is not fit to cenſure others. In the time of the Leu.21.21. Law he that had a blemiſh muſt not offer the bread of the Lord. To ſhew that the Preacher in regard of groſſe ſinnes muſt be vnblameable. It is a dangerous thing to ſentence another to hell for drunkenneſſe, vſury, ſwearing, &c. and yet be guiltie our ſelues in an high nature of the ſame crimes. Surely the Lord will ſay to ſuch at the laſt, as to the euill ſeruant in the Goſpel; *O thou euil ſeruant, out of thy owne mouth I condemne thee.* Such are their owne Iudges, and the Lords owne mouth, who will proceed againſt them accordingly. Neither is this to be vnderſtood

derſtood onely of publicke perſons, ſuch as Magiſtrates and Miniſters are, whoſe functions and callings are to reproue ſinne in others; but euen of priuate men alſo, ſuch as this Penitent Thiefe was; their condemning of the faults of other men redounds vnto themſelues, and they being guiltie of the ſame, paſſe the ſentence therein vpon their owne ſoules. *Therefore art thou inexcuſable O man, whatſoeuer thou art that condemneſt, for in that thou condemneſt another, thou condemneſt thy ſelfe, for thou that condemneſt doeſt the ſame things.* Rom. 2. 1. And as this is the duty of euery man that reproueth another, firſt to looke vnto himſelfe that he be not guiltie of the ſame fault; So eſpecially are the Miniſters of the Word tied vnto this duty. *A Biſhop* (ſaith *Paul*) *muſt be blameleſſe,* Tit. 1. 7.

lesse, as the Steward of God. And
Tit.2.7. he exhorteth *Titus*, in all things *to shew himselfe a patterne of good works*. Thus the Lord in the time
Num. 8.6. of the Law commanded the *Levites* should themselues first be cleansed before they serued in the Temple: How much more now in the time of the Gospell, doth the Lord require this sanctified life in his seruants? Now the Reasons do further cleare the necessitie hereof. For,

Reas. 1. First, a guiltie conscience takes off the edge of a reprehension we giue to others, when our owne consciences shall tell vs, wee are guiltie of the same our selues, we cannot so boldly, so zealously, and so freely, reprehend sinne in others that we our selues are guilty of. And therefore when *Iethro* exhorted *Moses* his sonne in law to appoint officers in euery City,

he

he shewed what manner of persons they should bee, namely, *Men fearing God, and hating couetousnesse.* For indeed, how could they either reproue or correct that in others, whereof they themselues were guiltie; neither can the Minister, or any other, so freely and faithfully reprehend those faults in others, least the prouerbe bee returned vpon them, *Physitian heale thy selfe.* Exod.18. 21. Luk.4.23.

The second reason may bee drawn from the great danger that such men are in, of Gods wrath and fearefull vengeance to fall vpon them. We may see this in some sort in *Moses*, an holy seruant of God, whom the Lord sent to be a guide and deliuerer of his people: and going downe into Egypt the Lord met him by the way to haue slaine him; and the reason was this, he had not circumcised his 2

sonne

ſonne *Eliazar*, according to the commandement. Now the Lord would not haue him to circumciſe his Church abroad, that made no reckoning of circumciſing his familie at home. Wo be to them that are offenſiue in life, that lay ſtumbling blockes before the people.

3. Thirdly, ſuch men, eſpecially Miniſters, if they be wicked, do ſeldome any good in their place. For albeit, I confeſſe, the efficacy of the Word and Sacraments depend not vpon the worthineſſe of the perſon of the Miniſter that diſpenſeth the ſame, but vpon Gods owne power and promiſe, who doth make his owne ordinance effectuall whenſoeuer, and to whomſoeuer it pleaſeth him. As a meſſenger may deliuer money though he himſelfe haue no part in it; ſo may ſuch commy the

grace

grace of God to others, though they themſelues haue no part therein. Yet it cannot be but the wickednesse of *Elies* ſonnes will make the Lords ſacrifices to bee abhorred of the people. 1. Sam. 2. 17.

Vſe.

This ſhewes then what conformitie doth beſt become the Miniſter of Chriſt, namely, when puritie of doctrine and vnblameablenesse of conuerſation go together. This was taught the Prieſts in the time of the Law, by that *Vrim* and *Thummim*, which muſt euer go together. The Apoſtle *Peter* requireth theſe two things of an Elder, *To feed the flocke of Chriſt*, and to be an *example to the flocke*. For then the Lords building goeth on well, when theſe two go hand in hand together. For alas, we ſee that practice preuailes aboue precepts; and examples are more powerfull then 1. Pet. 5. 2. 3.

rules,

rules, either to the imitation of that is good, or detestation of that is euill. Now when those that should shine as starres in the Church, shall walke inordinately, though they preach the word as *Iudas* did, are neither so profitable in the Church, nor shall they themselues escape damnation. And therefore let this admonish vs all of what calling or condition soeuer, to looke well to our selues, and first to plucke out the beame out of our owne eye, that such reprehensions and admonitions we shall vse towards others, may neither bee retorted with shame vpon our owne heads, nor proue vnprofitable vnto our brethren. For how shall the people follow their Pastors, when they make no conscience to walke before them in the wayes of godlinesse? Hitherto of the generall Instructions.

Mat. 7.5.

1. Cor. 11.1. Phil. 3.17. 1. The. 1.6

Rebu-

rebuked him.

We come now to his reprehension, as the fame is a fruit of his conuersion, and that appeares in that great care hee had ouer his fellow, to keepe him from sinne, and to bring him if it were possible to the participation of the same grace and mercy that hee himselfe had receiued. Note wee hence first of all,

That it is a true note of a true conuert to stop others in a course of sinne, euery man stands bound much as in him lyeth to keepe others from sinne. It was a cursed speech of cursed Cain, *Am I my brothers keeper?* Euery man is in some sort his brothers keeper. It is the Lords own charge giuen vnto his people, *Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thy heart, but thou shalt reprone*

Text.

The manifestation of his conuersion.

I

In rebuking his fellow.

Doct. 1. True note of a true conuert to stop others in a course of sinne. Gen. 4.

Leuit. 19. 17.

reproue him. How frequent haue the Prophets and the faithfull seruants of God of old beene in this duty? *Esay* for this cause was accounted so contentious a man, that nothing in the land could please him. So *Hieremy, woe is me that my mother hath borne me a man of strife.* This was like wise *Ezechiels* case, an argument of his faithfulnesse in reprouing of sinne, that he met with so much crosse and hatred from the world.

Ier. 15.10.

This care the Lord Iesus Christ himselfe, the chiefe Shepheard and Bishop of our soules, manifested towards his Apostle *Peter; Simon, Simon, Sathan hath desired to winnow thee, but I haue prayed for thee that thy faith faile not.* And doth likewise inioyne him that had receiued so great a mercy from Christ, that he should shew the like mercy to his brethren,

Luk. 22.31. 32.

thren, saying, *When thou art conuerted, strengthen thy brethren.* To this purpose serueth that of the Apostle, *Take heed brethren, lest there bee in any of you an euill heart of vnbeliefe, in departing from the liuing God, but exhort one another daily whilest it is called to day, lest any of you bee hardned through the deceitfulnesse of sinne.* And this is taught by our blessed Sauiour, when hee teacheth vs to pray thus, *Leade vs not into temptation*: wherein our Sauiour will teach vs that it ought to be the care of euery Christian to desire, to pray for, and by all meanes possible, to labour that our brethren be kept from sinne: and this was Christs owne practice in that prayer of his hee made for his Disciples, *That God would keepe them from euill. I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the*

Heb. 3.12. 13.

Mat. 6.

Ioh. 17.11. Verse 15.

world, but that thou wouldest keepe them from euill: and indeed the ingemination and doubling of the petition, shewes the wonderfull care he had of his people. And to this purpose excellent is that of the Apostle Saint *Iames, Brethren* (saith he) *If any of you doe erre from the truth, and one conuert him, let him know that hee which conuerteth a sinner from the error of his way, shall saue a soule from death, and shall hide a multitude of sinnes.* There can bee no greater testimony of a gratious heart, and that the worke of regeneration and sound conuersion is wrought in a man, then by testifying his care ouer his brother, to keepe him from sinne. And on the contrary part, it is a note of a false Prophet, and of a graceleſſe heart, to winke at the sinnes of others. *Thy Prophets haue looked out vaine and*

Iam. 5. 19. 20.

Lam 2. 14.

and foolish things for thee, they haue not discouered thine iniquities, to turne away thy captiuity.

But the reasons will make it more cleare. *Reas.* 1.

First, they are our brethren, this may be one forcible reason to perswade vs to the practise of this duty, to stop them in their course of sinning. They are our brethren, and they are in some sort committed to our keeping, and if wee shall suffer them to sinne without rebuke or reprehension, insomuch that they perish, the Lord will say vnto vs, as sometimes he said to *Cain*, *where is thy brother?* when it will be in vaine for vs to post off the matter with *am I my brothers keeper?* for the Lord for this sinne will proceed against vs as he did against *Cain*, *what hast thou done? the voyce of thy Brothers blood cryeth vnto mee from the earth.* Gen. 4. 10.

When it shall be in vaine for any man to pleade, they neuer offered violence to the liues of their brethren, since they neuer sought to stop and restraine them in their sinfull courses; but suffered them to goe on in all manner of sinnes, without reprehension.

Accessories by the law, are as deepe wee say in the sinne, as the principall, yea, and many times suffer with the malefactor: thus is it with sinne, so dangerous a thing it is to be silent at the committing thereof.

2 Secondly, Saint *Iames* addeth two other most excellent motiues or reasons to perswade vnto this duty, *Hereby we shall saue a soule,* Iam. 5. 20. *and couer a multitude of sinnes.* Then the which, what more noble or honourable seruice can a Christian perform either towards God or man.

First,

First, to saue a soule, the very Angels rioyce at the conuersion of a sinner, the promise is, that such a one *shall shine as the starres in the firmament*, and indeed this is such a worke whereunto all the faithfull must addict themselues, according to that measure of grace giuen them, and that petition we put vp daily, *Thy kingdome come*. When wee shall labour to bee instruments to inlarge that kingdome of the Lord Iesus, and bring others from sinne, to God, otherwise indeed wee doe but mocke God, like as if a husbandman should pray, *Giue vs this day our daily bread*, and neuer set his hand to the plough, nor cast his seede into the ground. Luke 15. Dan. 12, 3.

Againe, what a blessed thing is it to helpe to couer sinne, yea, a *multitude of sinnes*, which those shall doe, that are any wayes a

meanes to bring others to the sight of their sinnes, and to repentance for the same: for this, such is the policy of Sathan, and such is the corruption of euery mans heart by nature, that they seeke by all meanes possible to couer their sinnes. But how? euen as *Adam* his nakednesse, with fig-leaues, that can neuer shelter them from Gods wrath. So euery man seeketh something or other to couer his sinnes, but the best way to haue sinne couered, is first to vncouer them. Ier 31,18. *After I was conuerted, I smote vpon my thigh*, saith *Ephraim*, so *Dauid*, Psal. 51.3. *My sinne are euer before mee*, and what followed, *Against thee onely haue I sinned*. Happy man *Nathan* that did so vncouer sinne, that GOD might couer them.

3. Thirdly, euery Christian must make conscience of this duty, to

stop

stop others in a course of sinne in regard of himselfe, lest hee bring vpon his owne head the sinnes of other men. Now euery man hath enough to answer for of his owne, though hee become not guiltie of other mens sinnes.

Quest. But how may a man be charged with the sins of others?

This is done three wayes, in { Heart. Word. Deede.

Answ. How many wayes a man becomes guilty of the sins of other men.

I In heart.

First, in heart, and that three wayes. First, when though hee neither commit the euill himselfe, nor approue of the same being committed by others, yet if hee mourne not in his heart for the same sinne, to see how God is dishonoured, and how greatly the soule of the offender is indangered, hee becomes guiltie of this sinne. This was the fault of the Corinthians, for the which *Paul*

reproues them, who when they saw the incestuous person, who had sinned so foully, they sorrowed not, nor grieued as they ought for that sinne. A contrary example we haue in *Dauid*, *My eyes gush out with water, because men keepe not thy law:* and of righteous *Lot*, whose righteous soule was grieued at the abhominations of the filthy Sodomites.

Psal. 119. 136.

2 Secondly, when though a man neither doth or saith any euill himselfe, yet secretly in his heart approueth of the euill of another: This was *Pauls* sinne before his conuersion, hee cast no stone at *Stephen* himselfe, yet he consented vnto his death, as himselfe confessed, and *held the cloathes* of them that did stone him, and in this regard was guiltie of his death.

Acts 7. 58. Acts 22, 20

3 Thirdly, by conniuence, silence, or indulgence, when a man shall suffer

suffer sinne and the sinner to passe without reproofe. And thus was *Eli* faultie in not punishing his sonnes, for which sinne the Lord punished him. And thus offendeth the Minister in not reprouing the sinnes of those, ouer whom the Lord hath set him, and so likewise the Magistrate in not punishing offenders vnder him. Yea, and this is the sinne of all such as can with patience heare the Lord dishonoured, his Name blasphemed, his Sabbaths prophaned, and all manner of impiety committed, without any reproofe at all, like vnto *Gallio*, will not trouble themselues about such things, whereas the Lord doth require this at the hands of euery Christian, that haue themselues obtained mercy by admonition, exhortation, reprehension, and by all other helps and meanes, to shew mercy to

Eze. 3. 17.

Act. 18. 15 16.

to others to stoppe them in the course of sinne.

2 In word. Secondly, a man may be guiltie of the sinnes of other men in *word*, and that three wayes.

I 2 Sam. 11. 15. Mar. 6. 29. First, by counselling another to euill, and thus became *David* a murtherer by the letter he sent vnto *Ioab* in the matter of *Vriah*; and thus the mother of the Damsell became guiltie of the Baptists death, by councelling her daughter to require his head.

2 Luk. 11. 40. Esay 5. 20. Secondly, by defending of sin, or iustifying the euill of another, and thus are many Lawyers partakers of the euill of their clients, who for lucre sake, will speake good of euill, and iustifie the wicked for a reward: in which regard it were well with them, they were as lame of their tongues, as *Mephibosheth* of his legs.

Thirdly, by applauding ano-

ther

ther in euill, and soothing them vp in their sinnes, against whom there is a curse gone out from God, *Woe vnto them that sow pillowes vnder mens arme-holes.* Eze.13.18

And lastly, a man becomes guilty of other mens sinnes, in *Deed*, and that two wayes. 3. In Deed.

First, when albeit they be not the immediate instrument in sin, yet haue a part and share in the euill done; and thus all receiuers of such goods as they know or suspect to be stolne, are partakers with theeues in their sinne, and so by the law are iudged. 1

Secondly, when a man shall familiarly conuerse with such as are knowne to bee notoriously wicked, such receiue no small incouragement to goe on in their sinfull course, when notwithstanding all their abhominations, they are not reiected of others. 2 Pſal.50.21

But

Obiect. 1. But the Lord ſaith vnto the Prophet, *Sonne of man, I haue made thee a watchman, and thou ſhalt warne the people from me.* It ſeemes there that it is peculiar vnto the office of the Miniſter, to admoniſh and reproue others. And we know it is the exhortation of the Apoſtle, *Let euery man abide in the ſame calling wherein he was called.* And againe, *They watch for your ſoules as they that muſt giue accounts vnto God.* What then haue priuate men to do with reproouing others for ſinne?

Ezek. 3. 17

Heb. 13. 17

Reſp. To teach and preach publikely in the Church is the peculiar office of the Miniſter, and thoſe whom the Lord hath fitted for that worke; but this doth no whit hinder priuate exhortation, and admonition of priuate men, as God ſhall offer occaſion, yea this libertie they haue to ſpeake euen

euen to their Minister himselfe in priuate, as *Paul* speaketh vnto the Colossians, *Say ye to Archippus, take heed to thy Ministery to fulfill it.*

But is euery man to be rebuked at all times that deserueth rebuke? *Quest.*

No, *Rebuke not a scorner*, saith *Solomon*, or a *drunkard*, when the wine is in his head. *Abigal* would not tell *Nabal* of his drunkennesse then, euery time is not fit, a man must obserue the fittest time, and watch his opportunity. *Answ.* 1. Sam. 25.

Now this impenitent Thiefe was a dying, this was a fit time for his fellow to reproue him, and for him to receiue a rebuke, or else neuer.

There is a time for all things, saith *Solomon*, and a word spoken in due time is like an *Apple of gold*, Eccl. 2.

gold, and pittare of siluer. Christ chose the fittest time to teach the people, and to do good, and that in the Synagogue vpon the Sabbath. So *the Church hauing peace did then edifie themselues.* And indeed the children of this world are wiser in their generation then the children of light. *Potiphars* wife chose the fittest time to prouoke *Ioseph* to lust, *Ioseph was alone in the house.* *Esau* chused the fittest time to be reuenged on his brother: *The dayes of mourning for my father will haue an end, and then I will kill my brother.* In the affaires of this life, men are wise to take the fittest opportunitie. The *Crabfish* desiring to feede on the *Oyster*, cannot perforce open the shell, therefore watcheth opportunitie till the oyster openeth himselfe against the Sunne, and then putteth in his claw. This wise-

Act 9.31.

Gen.39.11

wisedome ought to bee in euerie Christian to take the fittest opportunitie to the doing of good.

But he is my superiour whom I heare sweare, and blaspheme the name of God, or otherwise sinne, what haue I to doe with such a one? *Obiect. 2.*

Indeed I grant there may be a preposterous zeale and boldnesse in man, that is rather to bee condemned then commended: therefore inferiours must know that it is their part rather to aduise, then reproue; to aduertise, then to reprehend their superiours, lest they passing the bonds of their calling, do iustly exasperate them against them; for as Magistrates, Ministers, parents, and masters, by Gods ordinance are to rebuke, reprehend, and punish; So subiects, people, children, and seruants by the same rule are to aduise and aduertise: *Resp.*

See Mr. *Laptborne* his *spirituall Almes.*

aduertise: And thus did the seruants of *Iob* deale with their maisters; and *Iob* saith, that *he durst not contemne the iudiciall of his seruant, or maid, when they contended with him.* A reproofe to such must be vsed as a sowre pill couered ouer with sugar, that it may the more easily be taken downe: *Brethren* (saith the Apostle) *if any man be ouertaken with a fault, ye which are spirituall, restore such a one in the spirit of meekenesse, considering thy selfe, lest thou also be tempted.* A metaphor, as the originall signifieth, borrowed from Surgeons, which with a sleight of hand put a shattered bone into its place, before the partie be almost ware of it.

Iob 31.

Gal. 6. 1.

καταρτίζετε.

Vse 1. This serues for the iust reproofe of those that can see men runne a licentious course, and neuer seeke to reclaime them; that can heare others

others ſweare and blaſpheme the name of God, raile vpon Miniſters, and ſpeake euill of the good way of righteouſneſſe, without any zeale for God, or compaſſion to the ſoules of their brethren. Many there be that will neuer rebuke ſinne in their brethren, vntill God reuenge it from heauen, whereas if they had met with due reprehenſion of their faults, they might haply haue been brought to repentance, and ſo haue preuented thoſe plagues.

Or if men doe ſpeake of the ſinnes of others, it is behind their backs in the moſt vildeſt and diſgracefulleſt manner that may be. Theſe rather ſhew themſelues to be of the generation of curſed *Cham*, that vncouered the nakedneſſe of his father, then of Gods people that mourne for the ſinnes of others, and in brotherly loue

seeke by all meanes possible, to recouer them into the state of grace. No doubt it pierced this Penitent Theife to the heart, to heare him blaspheme and raile on Christ, he can by no meanes beare it. But howsoeuer his owne griefe was great, and paine grieuous, he seemeth to neglect all, and falleth to the rebuking of his fellow, sinning against God; this will a gracious heart do. And wo to that man that can with patience heare God dishonoured, that is not affected with the sinnes of other men, such are farre enough from the worke of grace and conuersion, and from that Christian compassion that ought to be in vs towards others, to *saue a soule*, to *couer a multitude of sinnes*, or to free themselues from the sinnes of other men.

2. Secondly, this may serue to admonish

admoniſh euery one in the feare of God to make conſcience of this duty, that we admoniſh one another, and ſeeke to conuert one another from going aſtray, this is the trueſt teſtimonie of loue, we can ſhew to others. For indeed no man loueth naturally, that doth not loue ſpiritually; for by how much the more excellent the ſoule is aboue the body, by ſo much the more excellent is the loue to it, aboue that of the body. And indeed this will be a ſound witneſſe vnto our hearts, of our loue towards others, in that wee haue admoniſhed our brethren, and ſought by all meanes poſſible to recouer them from their ſinfull waies. It ſhall be a pretious balme that ſhall not breake their heads. Neither may theſe thoughts hinder vs that we haue no hope to preuaile by our admonitions and

reprehenſions, this we are not ſo much to looke after, as the conſcionable diſcharge of our owne duty. And thus farre we are ſure we ſhall glorifie God, to be witneſſes of his word and truth; when the wicked in the laſt day ſhall be put to ſilence, not being able to plead ignorance, or that they had no warning.

And let vs know that the Spirit of God bloweth where it liſteth, and the Lord can cuen of *Lyons*, *Tygers*, and *Cockatrices*, make at his pleaſure to become the ſheepe of Chriſt: of *Abraham* an Idolater, he can make the Father of the faithfull; of bloudie and barbarous *Manaſſes*, he can make an humble Conuert; and of a perſecuting *Saul*, he can make a painfull preaching *Paul*: and of a lewd gracceleſſe Theefe, an holy confeſſour. Let none therefore be diſcouraged,

discouraged, because of the lewdnesse of the person, seeing the Lord is able, and many times doth call home of the sinfullest of men.

And last of all, this may serue to admonish euery man in the feare of God, *To suffer the word of exhortation*, and to labour to keepe vnder all repining thought and euill disposition that is in their hearts, which bewray themselues neuer more, then when they are admonished or reproued for sinne, and doubtlesse Sathan himselfe bloweth the coales, knowing that it is an excellent meanes to recouer a sinner out of his power. O how hardly is a reproofe digested by a naturall man, that hath not the worke of grace in him! It is found often true which *Salomon* saith, *Reproue a scorner and he will hate thee.* A sharp reproofe

3

Heb. 13. 22

is more hardly digested then the bitterest pill, men would not be disturbed in their sinfull courses. But if the Lord loue thee, he will send thee one faithfull friend or other to reproue thee. And surely it is a fearefull thing, and a signe that God hath cast off such a soul his care, and that hee intends to glorifie himselfe in the destruction of such a one, that is suffered to go on in sinne without controllment.

Let the righteous smite me friendly (saith *Dauid*) *and reprone me.* And well fare that heart that can so willingly suffer a reproofe. The sweetest meats are not alwayes the wholesomest, neither are the sharpest reproofes worst for the soule. Hee is a miserable man that if his neighbour shall tell him of his enemies purpose to kill him, should hate him for his paines,

paines; much more wretched and miserable is the case of that man, that being put in minde of the danger of sinne, how his soule is like to be made a prey vnto Sathan, will requite this warning with displeasure. Let vs not bee such spirituall fooles, *Hee hateth his sonne, that spareth the rod,* saith *Salomon.* The best kindenesse is to smite while there is hope, and to reproue betimes ere it bee too late. Pro.13.24.

But the other rebuked him. Text.

Here wee haue a true patterne of a true penitent, and looke what affection and disposition is here wrought in the heart of this Penitent towards his fellow, the same affection & disposition is wrought in some measure in all those, to whom the Lord hath vouchsafed

the like grace. Now his care is manifested towards his fellow in this, to bring him if it were possible to the sight of his sins, and to repentance for the same. And herein will teach vs,

Doct. 2. A true Conuert desires that others may partake of the same grace

That true repentance and conuersion vnto God, begets in the heart of a godly man, a desire of the like grace towards others. There is no one truth more apparent throughout the whole Scriptures, then this. How Gods people being themselues conuerted, and hauing this grace giuen them to repent and beleeue, haue endeuored to bring others to the knowledge of the truth likewise. Thus the faithfull in the Primitiue time of the Church, hauing tasted themselues, and seene how gratious the Lord is, they prouoke others to imbrace the same grace, together with themselues.

Come (say they) *let vs goe vp to the mountaines of the Lord.* A true conuert cannot but proclaim the goodnesse of God vnto others. *Come* (saith *Danid*) *and I will shew you what God hath done for my soule.* Gods grace is like fire in the bones, as saith the Prophet. *His Word was in my heart as a burning fire shut vp in my bones, and I was weary of forbearing, and I could not stay.* Christ forbade the two blinde men in the Gospell that were cured of their blindenesse, straightly that they should tell no man; but what saith the Text, *When they were departed, they spred abroad his fame in all that country;* They could not for their lines conceale it: so *Andrew* when hee had found Christ, hee had no rest till he had acquainted *Peter.* The like wee may see in *Philip* towards *Nathaniel;* wee may

Esay 2.3.

Psal.66.16

Ier.20.9.

Mat. 9.30. 31.

Ioh.1.41. Verse 45.

may see this in *Dauid*, who hauing petitioned the Lord in this wise, *Make mee to heare the voyce of ioy and gladnesse, &c.* what followeth, *Then will I teach thy waies vnto the wicked, and sinners shall be conuerted vnto thee.* The woman of Samaria leaues her pot behinde her, and runs into the town, that as shee had receiued Christ, she might bring the tidings of ioy to her neighbours, to prouoke them also to see and to heare Christ.

Psal. 51. 12 13.

Ioa. 4. 28.

And what might be the reason wherefore *Matthew* the Publican inuited so many to his house when Christ was to come thither? no question he had this good intent therein, that they also that came thither, might reape some good by Christ.

Luk. 5. 29.

These are those riuers of waters our Sauiour prophecyed of, that should

Ioh. 7. 37.

shoulde flow from the bellies of true beleeuers, euen to the refreshing of the dry and barren hearts of others, to cause them to bring forth also the fruits of righteousnesse. This will grace doe.

Wee may see this likewise in *Onesimus*, whom *Paul* sent backe vnto his Master *Philemon* with this testimony, that howsoeuer in times past, that is, before his conuersion, he was vnprofitable, yet now saith *Paul*, *is profitable to thee and me.*

No Vsurer is more forward to put out his money, as it commeth into his hand, for an increase, as is the childe of God to improue the grace receiued for the good of others. And it must needs be so,

First, in regard of the nature and propertie of grace it selfe, which is of a generatiue nature, producing

producing grace; this Talent cannot bee hid or kept close in the heart without profit or increase. Indeed the common gifts of the spirit, such as are giuen many times to the wicked themselues, these are not so profitable, because they are but common gifts; but where the sanctified graces of Gods spirit are, *They are* (saith the Apostle) *giuen to edifie withall*, and these are neuer idle nor vnprofitable in the heart of a true beleeuer. As none are more desirous of wealth then the rich, so they that haue grace, are euer seeking for a further increase thereof.

2 Secondly, the godly know right well that the gifts and graces of the spirit are giuen to the same end: *viz.* that the body of Christ might be edified; hence is it that the Lord Iesus doth so straightly inioyne *Peter*, *When thou*

thou art conuerted, ſtrengthen thy brethren; and againe, *Let euery one as he hath receiued a gift, miniſter the ſame one vnto another, as good diſpoſers of the graces of God.* Luk.22.32 1 Pet.4.10

And indeed God doth neuer giue to any of his ſeruants any ſpirituall grace, for his owne priuate benefit alone, but that hee might be a good Steward and Diſpoſer of the grace of God, for the good of others. And hence is it that the Apoſtle concludeth of the grace beſtowed vpon him, that *God had comforted him, that hee might comfort others with the ſame comfort.* 2 Cor.1.4.

Thirdly, there is no ſeruice that a Chriſtian can doe in the Church, that hath the like promiſe of recompence or reward, as that which extendeth to the ſoules of men. *Let him know that he that hath conuerted his brother,* Iam.5.20.

hath

hath saued a soule from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins, and
Dan 12.3. againe, *They that turne many to righteousnesse, shall shine as the starres for euer and euer.* The mercies that men shall shew here vnto the bodies of the Saints, shall bring with them a sure reward. *He*
Luke 10. *that shall giue but a cup of cold water vnto a Disciple, in the name of a Disciple, shal not lose his reward.* How much more shall the feeding and refreshing of hunger-starued soules with the bread of life, that are ready to perish, be plentifully rewarded with him?

Vse 1. Seeing then that where there is the worke of grace and true conuersion, such labour by all meanes possible to bring others into that happy condition with themselues. This may serue for matter of tryall and examination of the work of grace in our selues.

Would

Would we haue the comfort of our owne conuerſion and repentance, doe but queſtion thy owne heart how thou ſtandeſt affected towards thoſe thouſands in Iſrael, that yet are held in miſerable bondage vnder Sathan, & power of darkeneſſe, wallowing in the bloud of their owne ſoules. Canſt thou mourne for theſe as *Samuel* did for *Saul*? doſt thou pittie them in their ſpirituall miſeries, and doe thy bowels earne within thee towards ſuch? And doſt thou labour to the vtmoſt of thy power and according to thy calling, to bring home thoſe that goe aſtray, to the knowledge of the truth? doſt thou take all opportunities that are offered vnto thee, by admonition, inſtruction, and reprehenſion, to ſet forward the Lords worke herein? Surely there cannot be a more certaine note of the truth

truth of grace in thy heart, and of thy owne conuerſion, then this: *When thou art conuerted*, (ſaith our Sauiour to *Peter*) *Strengthen thy brethren*. No man can truely deſire and indeuer the ſpirituall good of another, that hath not taſted of the work firſt in himſelfe. But if on the contrary part, vpon this examination thou findeſt that there is in thee no touch at all of griefe for the ſins of other men, thou layeſt not their miſeries to heart: the horrible ſinnes of the times, ſuch as are whordome, pride, drunkenneſſe, ſwearing, prophanation of the Sabbath, &c. Theſe things doe no whit affect thee nor trouble thee, ſurely thou haſt cauſe to mourne in ſecret, and to be humbled for the hardneſſe of thy owne heart, for as yet the worke of grace is not wrought in thee, for if it were, it would manifeſt

manifeſt in this, to labour the ſpiritual good of others.

Doe but conſider the truth of this poynt in the example of this Penitent Theefe, that had the leaſt time that euer we read of, or heard of, to manifeſt the fruits of his repentance in, and we ſhall ſee that howſoeuer his time was ſhort, and he was now to minde the euerlaſting welfare of his ſoule, yet hee is not vnmindfull of the ſpirituall miſery of the ſoule of his Brother, by rebuking him for his blaſphemy, by putting him in minde of his ſinne, and the equitie of that his deſerued puniſhment, that was now inflicted vpon him, and all to this end, if it were poſſible, that his heart might bee touched with ſome remorſe for ſinne, and hee be brought to repentance for the ſame. There is no grace in that heart that doth not indeuer

this in some measure of life.

2 Secondly, if their case be miserable that doe not compassionate others in their spirituall miseries, what shall wee say of those that with *Simeon* and *Leui*, are brethren in iniquitie, that prouoke one another, *come let vs cast in our lots together*: that are Sathans spokesmen, and solicitors to draw men into sinne. And those againe that are so farre from labouring the spirituall good of others, as *Iehoiakim* like, by reproches and disgraces, lay stumbling blocks in the way of others, to hinder them in their Christian courses, like the Scribes and Pharisies, against whom our Sauiour pronounceth a *woe*, because they entred not into the kingdome of God themselues, nor suffered those that would.

3 And last of all, this may prouoke

looke all vnto this duty, and to labour to approue the truth of their owne conuersion, by labouring to be instruments of the spirituall good of others. And this duty rests vpon all, for we are all a *kingdome of Priests*, and haue receiued a holy accomptment of the Father. So especially, the Ministers of the Word, whose sacred calling cals for this duty, they are in a speciall manner to looke vnto it; they are to preach the Word *in season and out of season. Sow thy seede* (saith *Salomon*) *in the morning, and let not thy hand rest in the euening, for thou knowest not which shall prosper*: God calleth not all at the same houre, but some at one time, and some at another; neither doth hee make the Word effectuall at all times at the first hearing, for the strong man armed will not quickly leaue his

Reu. 1.6.

2 Tim. 4.2.

Luke 11.

possession. But many liue long vnder the ministery of the same, before they beleeue and imbrace it, yet at the last God toucheth the hearts of many, to attend and to be saued. What though they doe not finde that comfortable returne of their labours: are not some to lay the foundation, and others to raise vp the building? Is not the Word to be the sauour of death to some, as it is to be the sweet sauour of life to other-some? Is not *their reward with the Lord, and their recompence with their God?* And vnto this day must Parents and Masters be prouoked to set forward the Lords worke, by the conscionable performance of *Oeconomicall* duties, they must bee helpefull vnto the Minister this way; it is not enough for them to bring their people to Church, and to cast them off so

Esa.49.4.5

vnto

vnto the Minister, his burthen is too great if thou helpe not. The Apostle cals *Philemon*, his *fellow labourer*: no doubt it was in regard he so fitted and prepared his family for *Pauls* ministery. And for this, many of Gods worthy seruants are highly commended in the Word, as *Abraham*, *Iosuah*, *Cornelius*. The Parent and Master is as straightly charged with their families, as the Minister with the congregation: and if any vnder them doe dye for want of instruction, the Lord will require the bloud of such a one at their hands.

Phil. 1.

Gen. 18. Iosh. 24. Acts 10.

VERSE 40.

Doest thou not feare God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation?

HItherto wee haue heard the *Reprehension*, of the *Penitent Thiefe* in generall. *He rebuked him.*

Now the Euangelist comes to set downe the particulars of his reprehension, with those seuerall arguments and reasons to make the same the more effectuall: for he that is to deale with rebellious and obstinate sinners, had need to bring with him very mouing and effectuall arguments to dissuade from sinne.

Now his arguments are:

1. *A persona*: From the nature of the person against whom he *rayled. God.* 2. *A*

2. *A timore Dei*: From the feare of God, the want whereof was the cause of his blasphemy.

3. *A præsente miseria*: From his present miserie, *Knowing thou art in the same condemnation.*

4. *A iusto iudicio*: From the equitie of his punishment, *We are iustly punished.*

5. *Ab innocentia Christi*: From Christs innocencie, *This man hath done nothing amisse.*

All which being duely considered, are very powerfull motiues and argumeats, to set on his repentension, and to make the same the more effectuall.

And thus doth this Penitent manifest the truth of his conuersion by many blessed fruites, and effects thereof: The particulars whereof follow.

Text.

Feareſt thou not God?

q. d. O wretched man that now ſuffering the due reward of thy ſinne, ſhouldeſt thus blaſpheme an Innocent, euen the Lord Ieſus Chriſt himſelfe, from whom ſaluation commeth. Euen him before whom thou art ſhortly to appeare, to giue an account of all thy euill deeds, is there no feare of God at all with thee, that thou ſo malitiouſly blaſphemeſt? Thus he takes him vp roundly, and lets him ſee who it was that he blaſphemed, and whence it was that he brake out in this wiſe againſt Chriſt; The want of Gods feare.

Feareſt thou not God?

He doth not ſay, Doeſt thou mocke

mocke; But, *Feareſt thou not God?* Becauſe he would giue him to vnderſtand, againſt whom his ſinne did extend and reach it ſelf, namely, God himſelfe.

I Argument *A perſona.*

For no doubt the Impenitent Theefe was of the ſame opinion with the common people, that Chriſt was a meere man, and that his reproachfull ſpeeches reached not ſo high as God. And therefore this was his firſt argument he taketh vp to make his reprehenſion ſo much the more effectuall, that in rayling againſt Chriſt, hee rayled againſt God; his ſinne did reach vp to God himſelfe. Note we hence,

Doct. 1. The afflictions of the godly reach vnto Chriſt.

That the mockings, reproches, and perſecutions done againſt the godly, reach vnto God himſelfe. Whoſoeuer mocketh a ſeruant of God, mocketh God himſelfe. When *Saul* being a Phariſee perſecuted

secuted the Church, the voice from heauen was, *Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? Let no man put mee to businesse* (saith Paul) *for I beare in my body the markes of the Lord Iesus.* Euen so all those raylings of *Sennacherib*, *Whom hast thou reproached and blasphemed? and against whom hast thou exalted thy voyce? and lifted vp thine eyes on high, euen against the holy one of Israel.* And our Sauiour shewes that hee takes whatsoeuer is done vnto his members, as done vnto himselfe, whether good or euill, and accordingly rewardeth the one, and punisheth the other. So that whosoeuer mocketh or reproacheth a seruant of Christ, mocketh Christ himselfe in them. Of this before. Now the reasons are.

Act. 9.

2. Kin. 19. 22.

Mat. 25.

Reas. 1. First, in regard of the neare coniunction and spirituall vnion, that

that is betwixt Christ and euery true beleeuer; hee is their head, they his members. Now what member doth not sympathize with the other member, in euery naturall body, either in weale or woe? *If one member suffer* (saith the Apostle) *all the members suffer with it.* Thus is it in the mysticall body.

Secondly, God hath vndertaken for his children, yea he hath indented, sealed, and sworne their safetie and protection: *Hee that toucheth you, toucheth the apple of my eye*, saith God. He is therefore called their *Father*, their *Rocke*, their *Tower*, and their *strong Refuge*. 2 Zach. 2.

Vse 1. Which serues to discouer vnto vs, the miserable condition of the wicked, whose daily sinnes doe reach vnto God himselfe, and therefore must needs bee prouoked

ked at last to bring downe iudgements vpon them.

2 Secondly, to shew the happie condition of the faithfull, though those that trouble and molest them are many and mightie, *Yet he that dwelleth on high is mightier:* who partaketh with them in all their sufferings.

3. And last of all, it may be an excellent motiue to prouoke men to become his children by grace and adoption, to whom all these excellent priuiledges belong and appertaine.

Text. *Feareſt thou not God?*

2 Argument *A timore Dei.* As before this *Penitent* hath reproued the horrible blasphemy of his fellow: so in these words he goeth on to shew and to discouer vnto him from what a filthy and stinking fountaine the same proceeded

proceeded, namely, from the want of God's feare in his heart.

So that he leades him from the ſtreame to the fountaine, and from the fruit ſhewes him the bitter root from whence thoſe blaſphemies ſprang, namely, this, the want of the feare of God in his heart. And herein will teach vs,

That the want of the feare of God is the cauſe of all ſinne. From this euill fountaine doth flow all the euill that is in the world; *They feare not me, ſaith the Lord.* Such men muſt needs runne headlong into all kinde of wickedneſſe, for what ſhould reſtraine them, when the feare of God is wanting? By a *Proſopopeia* the Prophet *Dauid* bringeth in the tranſgreſſions of the wicked, ſpeaking thus: *The tranſgreſſion of the wicked ſaith within my heart, that there is no feare of God before their eyes.* The open

Doct. 2. The want of the fear of God the cauſe of all ſinne. 2. Kin. 17. 34.

Pſal. 36. 1.

open prophaneneſſe of wicked men ſeemed to proclaime this openly in the eares of the Prophet, that ſuch bade defiance to al godlineſſe, and wanting the feare of God, we may ſee the further behauiour of ſuch in the latter part of that Pſalme. So *Paul* hauing reckoned vp a bedroll of many horrible ſinnes, he addeth this as the cauſe of all, *The feare of God is not before their eyes.* Rom.3.18.

Abraham knew this full well, when he cauſed *Sarah* to ſay ſhe was his ſiſter, that the men of *Gerar* would not care to commit any ſinne: Why? *Becauſe the feare of God was not in that place.* And what may bee the reaſon that at this day men *breake out*, as the Prophet ſpeaketh, into lying, killing, whoring, &c. The reaſon is plaine, the feare of God is wanting. Gen.20.11 Hoſ.4.2.

On

On the contrary, where the true feare of God is, it will fence a man from ſinne. *Ioſeph* confirmed the timorous hearts of his brethren, that they ſhould feare no euill at his hands, why? *I feare God*, ſaith hee: this was it that fenced the heart of *Ioſeph* againſt the allurements of his adulterous Miſtreſſe. This kept the Midwiues of Egypt from laying hands vpon the Infants of the *Hebrewes*, the Text ſaith, *The Midwiues feared God*. And *The feare of God* (ſaith *Solomon*) is to *depart from euill*. This maketh a man to liue alwayes in Gods preſence, to be the ſame before God that he is before men; and to be the ſame before all men that he is before ſome; to be the ſame in the darkneſſe, that he is in the light; and to be the ſame in the night that he is in the day.

Gen.42.18

Gen.39.10

Exod.1.17

And

And hence is it that the Lord himselfe doth so earnestly wish for this thing in his people: *O* Deut.5.29. *that there were such an heart in them, that they would feare mee alwayes*, &c. as the onely thing that keepeth the heart vpright with him, and fenceth the same against all sinne. Whereas when this feare of God is wanting, such a one is fit for any sinne, lyes open to euery assault of Sathan, and cannot escape euill.

Reas. And the reason hereof is taken from the nature of Gods feare, it is the most excellent Antidote against sinne, and causeth Gods children to be loath to offend, not so much for feare of punishment, as for loue they beare vnto God.

Quest. 1. But what manner of feare is this, that is so vsefull in the life of a Christian, to keepe the heart vpright with God?

There

There is, I confeſſe, a twofold feare, the filiall, and ſonne-like feare, which is found onely in the godly; and the ſeruile and ſlauiſh feare, to feare God onely for his iudgements: and this is moſt vſually ſeene in the wicked; It is that ſonne-like feare that we here ſpeake of, whereby Gods children feare God, as a louing and dutifull childe his father; not ſo much for feare of the rodde, and puniſhmẽt if he offend, as of loue, as being fearfull to offend ſo good and ſo louing a father.

Anſ.

Whereas that ſeruile and ſlauiſh feare that is in wicked men, lookes onely to the puniſhment, as the gally-ſlaue to the whip, and that many times doth terrifie him, as for ſinne it ſelfe, it doth no whit trouble him: nay, as *Solomon* ſaith, *It is a paſtime to the foole to do wickedly.*

Quest. But may not Gods children abstaine from sinne for feare of Gods wrath, and for punishment sake?

Answ. I answer, the spirit of bondage and of feare hath its worke in the hearts of all the godly, especially at the first, when they begin to convert and to turne vnto God: And this is compared to a needle, that maketh way for the threed to follow. And thus haue the godly at first feared God, even for his iudgements sake, as Paul testifieth when he saith, *Ye haue not receiued the spirit of bondage to feare againe.* Rom. 8. 15. Wherein is implyed, that there is a time wherein the children of God feare God for his iudgements: but now, saith he, *Ye haue receiued the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.* and that is the spirit of freedome and of boldnesse. So that the child

of God is not alwayes held vnder that slauish feare, but commeth at last to feare God out of loue to him, and abstaineth from sinne not so much for punishment sake, as for the detestation hee beareth to it, and because it offendeth so good and so gratious a God. Yea though there were no *hell* at all to punish sinne, yet would hee not willingly commit sin out of that awfull respect hee beareth to so good a God and louing Father in Iesus Christ.

Now because this loue is not perfect in the childe of God, neither any other grace whilest wee liue here, there will be still a remnant of seruile feare remaining euen in the best, as *Iob* saith, *Punishment was fearefull vnto him.* Iob 31.23. Neither are they exempted from all feare of Gods iudgements, in as much as the remembrance

hereof is an excellent preseruatiue against sinne. So *Dauid*, *My flesh trembleth for feare of thee, and I am afraid of thy iudgements*. *Dauid* had in him a sonne like feare of God, fearing him out of loue, yet in the second place, he stood in awe of his iudgements.

Psal. 119. 120.

Vse 1. This serues then first of al to discouer vnto vs in what a wretched and miserable estate and condition such men are in, that haue not the feare of God before their eies; behold we the state of such in this impenitent Thiefe, such men must needs runne headlong into all manner of abhominations; for, alas, what should restraine them, when the feare of God is wanting? Marke the Apostle, *Their throat is an open sepulchre, with their tongues they haue vsed deceit; the poyson of aspes is vnder their lips: whose mouth is full of*

Rom. 3. 13, 13, 14, 15.

cursing,

cursing and bitternesse, their feet are swift to shed blood, destruction and misery is in their wayes, and the way of peace they haue not knowne. But what might bee the reason of all these vile and filthy abhominations? the Apostle subioynes, *There is no feare of God before their eyes.* *Abraham* knew this when hee caused *Sarah* his wife to dissemble, and to say shee was his Sister, and therefore wofull and miserable is the estate and condition of such, whom the Lord hath thus giuen ouer to themselues and to their owne hearts lust, and want this holy feare to preserue them.

Secondly, this may serue to admonish vs euery one, that as wee desire to be free from those grosse and grieuous enormities of the times, that wee labour to get our hearts seasoned with the feare of

God, that we may truely say, *The Lord is our feare, our dread.* This will fence vs from sinne, and arme vs against euery euill way, such are freed from those vile abhominations wherewith the liues of all wicked men for the most part are tainted withall. Yea, the feare of God is such an excellent thing, that all the duties wee owe vnto God, are comprehended therein; *Let vs heare the end of all* (saith Salomon) *feare God, and keepe his Commandements, for this is the whole duty of man.*

Esay 8.13.

Eccl.12.13

The priuiledges that belong to them that truely fear God.

Yea, to such belong all those excellent priuiledges and prerogatiues.

I Pſal.34.9.

Firſt, they ſhall not want any temporall good thing, *O feare the Lord O yee his Saints, for there is no want to them that feare him.*

Pſal.111.3

2

Secondly, ſuch hath the Lord promiſed to acquaint with his ſe-

crets.

crets. *The secrets of the Lord are with them that feare him.* Psal. 25 14.

Thirdly, such onely are vnder the Angels protection, *The Angels of the Lord encampeth round about them that feare him.* 3 Psal 34.7.

Fourthly, God takes speciall notice of such, *a booke of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord.* 4. Mal. 3. 16.

And last of all, for the life to come, no man is able to expresse the excellent priuiledges of such, *O how great is thy goodnesse which thou hast laid vp for them that feare him!* 5 Psal. 31. 19.

All which may be so many motiues to stir vp vs to get this feare of God, which hath the promise of this life, and the life to come, and to which alone so many excellent priuiledges belong and appertaine.

Text. *Seeing thou art in the same condemnation.*

3 Argument. In these words wee haue his third Argument, to dissuade his fellow from that his railing on Christ, and this is taken from his owne present misery; *Thou art* (saith he) *in the same condemnation, q.d.* Fye vpon thee most desperate wretch! Is this the behauiour meete for him that is now going to giue vp his last account before the great Tribunall, and that Iudge of all the world, before whom thou art shortly to appeare to giue account of all the actions of thy life past, especially of this thy blasphemy against the Lord Iesus the innocent? And herein as before, this penitent Theefe sheweth an excellent fruit of his owne repentance, pressing his fellow with

A præsenti miseria.

with this Argument, the consideration of his present misery, and punishment that was now vpon him, *Thou art in the same condemnation*: Note we hence,

That punishments and afflictions, especially such as summon to death, should in a speciall manner cause vs to looke home, humble vs, and cause vs to breake off our sinnes by repentance, and when they produce not this effect, especially when death approaches, and we are to come to appeare before the Lords Tribunall, it is a signe indeed that the heart is desperately wretched and sinfull: It is the maine end wherefore the Lord doth send afflictions to bring men home by repentance; thus confesseth the Church, *Man suffereth for his sinne, let vs search and try our wayes, and turne vnto the Lord*; and againe, *Come let vs re-*

Doct. Afflictions that summon to death, should in a speciall manner cause men to looke home.

Lam. 3. 39. 40.

Hos. 6.1. *returne vnto the Lord, for he hath wounded vs, and he will heale vs, he hath smitten vs, and hee will binde vs vp.* The happy fruit thereof, *Dauid* confesseth by that comfortable experience he had in himselfe, saying, *It is good for me that I haue beene in trouble, that I may learne thy commandements.* Psal. 119. 71 *When we are iudged,* (saith the Apostle) *wee are chastened of the Lord, that wee should not be condemned with the world.* 1 Cor. 11. 32. The Rod makes the childe to stand in awe of the Father, and the Scholler of the Master, and the *Blewnesse of the wound,* (saith *Salomon*) *serueth to purge the euill.* Pro. 20. 30 When did *Manasses* repent, was it not when he was in tribulation? 2 Chro. 33 12. When came the Prodigall sonne to himselfe, and got the happy resolution to returne againe to his Father, was it not when he was pinched with Luke 15.

the

the famine. It was in the time of aduersitie, that the Israelites remembred GOD, to bee their strength, who in times of prosperity, rebelled against him. *Ephraim* may thanke the Lord for his corrections, that hee was reclaimed and brought to see his owne disobedience and rebellion against God, who was as an vntamed Hayfer. The like we may see in *Hezechiah*, in *Iob*, and in all Gods people: if there be any faith, any hope, any grace at all in the heart of man, now is the time for the exercise thereof, when afflictions, especially such as summon to death and iudgement, are vpon vs. It seemed vnto this godly Penitent, a most hainous thing indeed in his fellow, yea, the height and top of all impietie, that now the hand of God was vpon him, and hee so shortly to depart this life,

Iudg. 6.

Ier. 31. 18. 19.

Esa. 38. 14.

and

and to make his last account before the Iudge of all the world, that he should in this reprochfull manner blaspheme an innocent, euen the Lord Iesus Christ himselfe, before whom he was shortly to appeare, and to giue account of all the things that he had done in the flesh.

But what shall I say? There are some, whom al the torments in the world cannot moue or make them better; sickneſſe, pouertie, shame in the world, all the buffettings of Sathan, or miseries that can bee thought vpon, alas, moue them not, nor any whit affect them, to worke remorse of conscience, compunction or sorrow for sinne, to make them any whit the better. But what may be the reason? can any affliction presse out of the creature, that was neuer in it? If a whole mountaine were laid vpon

a

a dry or rotten sticke, will it yeeld any sappe? no, no, it will first be ground to powder. The impenitent Thiefe for all his misery that he was in, or thoughts of death, or of iudgement, that now were vpon him, is not brought to the least remorse of conscience for sin; but the Penitent Thiefe he being vnder the same affliction, yeelds the sweet sap and liquor of faith and repentance; he confesseth his sinnes, pleads Christs cause, and compassionates the misery of his fellow, and shewes most admirable fruits of repentance. Yea, if there bee any grace at all in the heart of man, now is the time for it to shew it selfe, otherwise wee perish without hope.

Seeing then that afflictions should thus make vs to looke home, and that then in a speciall manner, the graces of the heart will

Vse 1.

will manifestly appeare. This shewes the misery of euery wicked man, that as he hath been a stranger from the life of grace in life, so must needs want the comfort of grace in death, as they haue liued, so commonly they dye; and in them that is verified oftentimes that is said of *Nabal*, their hearts dye like stones within them, like vnto a beast: Or else as they haue minded the world, their lusts and pleasures; of these things they speake, and their mindes run after them euen to the last. Behold here in this impenitent Thiefe, a spectacle wherein euery wicked man may behold himselfe; as hee was graceleſſe and wretched liuing, hee speakes nought but the language of hell dying, as his life; so was his death, wretched was hee liuing, and curſed and miſerable is he dying.

Secondly,

Secondly, this may ſerue to admoniſh euery one, that as wee would haue our laſt words gratious, and comfort in death, to learn to ſpeake the language of Canaan betimes; for when the euill day comes, all the wayte and burthen of iudgements and afflictions will neuer preſſe out one drop of ſpirituall moyſture from vs, no though they ſhould preſſe vs downe to hell, vnleſſe wee haue faith and repentance, and other graces wrought in vs before miſery comes.

2

VERSE

VERSE 41.

Text. *Wee indeed are iustly punished, for wee receiue the due reward of our deeds.*

4 Argument. IN these words, the Penitent comes to his fourth Argument, to dissuade his fellow from reuiling of Christ, and this is drawne from the equity and iustnesse of their punishment and present misery, *Wee indeed are iustly punished, for we, &c.*

A Iusto Iudicio. *2. d.* This present death wee are now to suffer, bee it neuer so vile, shamefull, ignominious, or accursed, we ought with patience to beare the same, for therein wee are but iustly punished. Our sins we haue committed, and wherein we haue continued, haue brought vpon our heads this deserued punish-

punishment. Wee ought therefore to beare with patience the Lords wrath, because wee haue sinned against him. Micha 7.9

And herein we haue another admirable fruit of his faith and repentance confessing,

1 His sinne.

2 Gods iustice.

We are iustly punished,

The Penitent Theefe, in rebuking his fellow, fals into a hearty confession of their sins, and herein likewise manifesteth the truth of his repentance. And will herein teach vs and all men vnto the end of the world,

1 He confesseth his sinne.

That vnto true repentance, confession of sinnes is most necessary; where the heart is truely and throughly touched with compunction and sorrow for sinne, it will

Doct. Vnto true repentance, confession of sins is necessary.

tune the tongue, and set it on worke, about the heartie acknowledgement of the same. This Penitent herein may be an excellent patterne vnto vs, who manifesteth herein the fruit of a wounded spirit and a broken heart, in the sence of sinne, hee stickes not to shame himselfe, that God may haue the glory, making a humble and heartie acknowledgement of his sinne, and the world therein a witnesse of his vnfained repentance, and indeed, to such onely belongs the promise of remission of sinnes. *He that hideth his sinnes, shall not prosper, but hee that confesseth them, and forsaketh them, shall finde mercy.* Pro. 28. 13

And againe, *If we confesse our sinnes, hee is faithfull and iust to forgiue vs our sinnes, and to cleanse vs from all vnrighteousnesse.* 1 Ioh. 1. 9. And hence is it that we shall finde the

seruants

seruants of God very frequent in this duty, in the times of their humiliation and conuersion vnto God. Thus *Daniel* confesseth his owne sinnes, and the sinnes of the people, *Wee haue sinned* (saith hee) *and haue committed iniquity, and haue done wickedly; yea, we haue rebelled, and haue departed from thy precepts, and from thy iudgements.* Dan.5.9.

Thus *Ezra*, that Noble and religious Scribe; *O my God, I am ashamed and confounded to lift vp my eyes to thee, for our iniquities are increased ouer our heads, and our trespasse is gone vp to heauen.* Ezra 9.6.

So *Esay* the Propher, *We haue all beene as an vncleane thing, and all our righteousnesse is as filthy clouts, and we doe all fade like a leafe, and our iniquities like the winde haue taken vs away.* Esay 64.6.

An excellent and admirable example whereof wee haue in the

Prophet *Dauid*, who when *Nathan* the Lords Prophet had conuinced him of his ſinnes, he preſently falls to the confeſſion of them, *I haue ſinned againſt the Lord*, &c. And in that Penitentiall Pſalme of his, penned of purpoſe to make knowne vnto the world that his vnfained repentance for the ſame, he is very exact that way throughout the whole Pſalme. This appeares in thoſe Conuerts wonne vnto the Church by the Miniſtery of the Baptiſt, *They were baptized of Iohn in Iordane, confeſſing their ſinnes.* And of thoſe Conuerts of *Epheſus*, it is ſaid, that *Many that beleeued came and confeſſed*, &c. The like acknowledgement is made by *Paul* of his mis-led life, whileſt he liued in the ſtate of a Phariſee, *I was* (ſaith he) *a blaſphemer, a perſecuter, and an oppreſſour,*

2.Sam. 12. 13.

Pſal. 51.2.

Mat. 3.6.

Act. 19.18.

1.Tim.1.13 18.

preſſour, &c. And excellent to this purpoſe is that of the Prodigall ſonne, a liuely patterne of a true Penitent, and a liuely picture of a reclaimed ſinner, hauing runne riot a long time, and by affliction at laſt brought to know himſelfe. What is his reſolution but this, by his confeſſion to make ſatisfaction to his Father whom hee had offended: *I will go to my Father, and ſay, Father, I haue ſinned againſt heauen and before thee*, &c. And as his reſolution and purpoſe was, ſo was his practice. And indeed true repentance cannot bee ſilent, when the heart is truly pricked it cannot forbeare, it is like a veſſell full pent with liquor, if it haue not ſome vent it will breake; it is one of the moſt ſouereigne ſalues for ſinne. Yea, as an Ancient well obſerues, *The bands of ſinne are looſed when they*

Luk. 15. 18.

Verſ. 21.

Erroris medicina eſt confeſſio.

are confessed. Nothing doth more bewray a broken heart within, then an open acknowledgement of sinne. What led that poore Publicane to that remorsefull supplication mixed with confession, *God be mercifull to me a sinner.* A liuely representation of the true contrition that was in his heart, that he held himselfe but vile and sinfull in Gods sight.

Luk.18.13.

And indeed as nothing can be more needfull and necessarie to testifie the inward sorrow of heart for sinne, then an heartie acknowledgement of the same: so there is nothing more contrary to the corrupt nature of man, then in this sort to shame himselfe, to giue God the praise. And therefore it is a good obseruation of an Ancient, *Let men admire what they please in other men, I know* (saith he) *through the infirmitie of our nature*

Mirentur quicunque volent, &c. Gregor.

nature, that the godly finde it an harder thing to confesse sinne after it is committed, then to represse it before. Surely it is no small euidence of grace in the heart, when a man is thrust forward, readily to confesse his faults to God, and vnto man, as the case may require, by whose aduice and prayers he may receiue comfort. The reasons follow.

First, acknowledgement of sin is necessarie vnto God, because all sinne is done against God; sinne reacheth euer vnto God himselfe, whose righteous Law is violated and broken, otherwise sinne could not be sinne. This is acknowledged by *Dauid*, when he saith, *Against thee onely haue I sinned.* The sinne of *Dauid* was the shedding of the innocent bloud of *Vriah*, and the defiling of his wife. But yet the violating and breaking

Reas. 1.

Psal. 51. 4.

ing of Gods moſt righteous Law, wherein God became to be offended, was it that went neareſt the heart of *Dauid*. Now if all ſinne be againſt God, it is requiſite that we ſhould make confeſſion of the ſame to him.

2 Secondly, without confeſſion we haue no promiſe of remiſſion of our ſinnes; for thus runnes the promiſe, *If we confeſſe our ſinnes,* 1.Ioh.1.9. *he is faithfull and iuſt to forgiue vs our ſinnes, and to cleanſe vs from all vnrighteouſneſſe.* Now as wee expect that the Lord ſhould ſhew vs mercy in the pardon of our ſinnes, it is requiſite that wee ſhould performe thoſe conditions which are required on our part, namely, to come vnto him in an humble acknowledgement of the ſame.

3 Thirdly, acknowledgement of ſinne is neceſſarie vnto God, be-

cauſe

cause it is hee onely that hath power to forgiue sinnes. This truth is confessed by the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, whose iudgements howsoeuer they were corrupt in many things, yet were sound in this, *Who can forgiue sinnes* (say they) *but God onely?* Now reason would that we make confession of our sinnes onely to him that hath power to forgiue sinnes. But this is onely in God, therefore to him must we go to make confession of the same. Mar. 2. 7.

Fourthly, confession of sinnes is necessarie, in regard it is an excellent thing to glorifie God. As wee haue dishonoured him by sinne, by an heartie confession of the same, we honour him againe; for herein wee acknowledge his principall attributes, namely, his omniscience, omnipresence, power, iustice, mercy, &c. And this is the 4.

the reason that *Iosuah* vrgeth vnto *Acan*, *My sonne, I pray thee giue glory to God, and confesse thy faults.* Where he ioynes these two together, *Gods glory*, and the confession of our faults. For sinne indeed doth not serue more to the dishonour of God, then doth an heartie confession of the same, serue to his honour. And this is the reason why Gods seruants hauing sinned, haue beene content to shame themselues, by confessing the same, knowing indeed it would bring so much glorie to God.

Ios. 7.19.

5. Fifthly, the conscionable performance of this duty is an excellent meanes to keepe the heart vpright with God for future times, and so a notable preseruatiue against sinne. For that man that hath once done his penance before God in that kinde freely,

peni-

penitently, and heartily, it will be a corasiue vnto his heart all the dayes of his life after, and make him to dread those sins that bring such a taile of sorrow with them in the end.

Sixthly, by our acknowledge- 6
ment of sinne we cleare the Lords iustice, and iustifie his Maiestie, in punishing vs for the same. Thus *Dauid* is led vnto this duty to make an hearty confession of his sinnes, *That thou* (saith he) *maist be iustified in thy sayings, and true when thou iudgest.* Psal. 51.4. This is cleare likewise in those excellent prayers of *Nehemiah*, *Daniel*, *Ezra*, &c. Nehe. 1.7. Dan. 9.5. Ezra 9.6.

And last of all, by recounting 7
duely our sinnes, and making due acknowledgement of the same, our hearts are the better fitted for prayer, and for all holy duties publicke and priuate, this makes vs earnest and affectionate in the

sutes

suites we put vp to God, for neuer is a poore sinner more earnest in his requests for mercy, then when hee is most sensible of his owne miserie, and in the sence thereof hath beene led to an hartie acknowledgement of the same. This makes men importunate suiters, such as will haue no nay, as it appeares in *Daniel*, *Ezra*, *Dauid*, the Cananitish woman, and the like.

Dan. 9.19. Ezra 9.6. Nehe. 1.11 Mat. 15.

Vse 1. This serues first of all to reproue diuers abuses about the performance of this duty of confession of sinnes, amongst which the corruption crept into the Church of Rome, is not the least, vrging that their *Auricular* confession of sinnes in the eares of the Priest, and that vpon paine of damnation, for these are their own words: *Euery one vnder the paine of damnation is bound to confesse to a lawfull*

Radford his Directory pag. 114.

full Prieſt his ſinne; A doctrine that hath not one Scripture in all the booke of God, vrging the neceſſitie of ſuch a confeſſion. Nay contrarily to many a one many a time, did our Sauiour giue abſolution of ſinne, where there was no particular confeſſion thereof made vnto him: as that man in the Goſpell that was ſicke of the palſie, vpon Chriſts ſight of his faith, he pronounced thus, *Sonne thy ſinnes be forgiuen thee.* And ſo to penitent *Mary*, teſtifying her repentance for ſinne by her abundant teares, our Sauiour pronounced, *Thy ſinnes are forgiuen thee.* But this is a ſubtile *net* which our Aduerſaries, like cunning Fiſhers of men, haue framed to catch mens goods, to inrich themſelues, to diſcouer mens ſecrets, euen in the Councels of Princes; and for the Prieſt to know where to haue

Mat. 9. 2.

Ioh. 7.

one

one for his turne.

Obiect. Iam. 5. 18. But doth not Saint *Iames* say, *Confesse your faults one to another?*

Answ. This is the Scripture I confesse that is principally vrged by our Aduersaries, to warrant their doctrine of *Auricular* confession. But by this Scripture the Priest is bound as straightly to shriue himselfe to the penitent, as the penitent to the Priest, for S. *Iames* requires it as a mutuall duty.

Indeed that there is a lawfull and commendable duty to bee performed amongst Christians in confessing of their faults one to another, was neuer denyed by vs, it is that wee often call vpon and prouoke men vnto. But yet in these two cases especially.

Cases of priuate confession First, in priuate and personall iniuries and wrongs done one to another, it is requisite that wee should

ſhould come and confeſſe our faults one to another, and to ſeeke forgiuenesſe, and to labour a reconciliation.

Secondly, in caſe of trouble of conſcience, to the end wee may not ſink vnder the burthen thereof, or any way giue aduantage vnto Sathan to haue the greater power ouer vs, it is an excellent thing to disburthen our ſoules by confeſſion of our particular ſinnes vnto ſome godly Miniſter, or ſome faithfull Chriſtian, that is knowne to be a man of wiſedome and conſcience, able to miniſter comfort: in theſe caſes it is a moſt commendable dutie.

But we hold it not as a matter of abſolute neceſſitie to confeſſe vnto men, as the Church of Rome doth, neither do we tye this duty to the Prieſts eare, but hold that it may bee performed alſo to a faithfull

faithfull Christian, albeit but a priuate man who is able to minister a word of comfort, and to beare anothers burthen in loue.

2 Secondly, this shewes how farre such men are from true repentance that are strangers vnto this dutie of *Confession*. Faine they would haue God to pardon their sinnes, but they yet neuer framed any Inditement against themselues; faine they would escape the iudgement of God, but they cannot endure to iudge themselues. And of these there are foure sorts.

1 First, such as are ignorant of their owne estates, and of their owne miserie by reason of sinne, these men rest with this generall acknowledgement of sinne, *We are all sinners*. And, *God forgiue vs, there is none without sinne*. But yet they neuer came truly to see

see any one sinne, how sinne hath made them guilty of Gods wrath and vengeance, and without repentance, makes them liable vnto euerlasting damnation: this knowledge of sinne whilest they are ignorant of, there can bee no true ioy nor heartie acknowledgment of sinne, and so no hope of pardon. It is the knowledge of the Word we know, that brings men to the sight of their sinnes, to an hearty acknowledgement of the same to God, and teacheth them how to pray for the pardon of the same, which whilest men remaine ignorant of, it is impossible to performe these duties aright.

Secondly, such as hide their sinnes, and conceale them, yea, if they be told of them, will outface them like *Gehezi*, who being questioned of his Master, *Thy Seruant went no whither*, saith he; and this 2. 2 Reg. 5. 25. Acts 5. 3.

was the behauiour of *Ananias* and *Saphira*, who rather then they would glorifie God by confessing their fault, sinned yet more and more, by lying vnto the holy Ghost. We haue too many of such amongst vs, that vnlesse you bee able to testifie vpon proofe, will hardly be brought to confesse any thing: wherein the policy of Sathan doth notably appeare, to take away shame where it should be in the committing of sinne, and to put it where it should not be, in the confession of the same. Whereas a true confessor will bee his owne greatest enemie, racking his sinne to the vtmost pin, that God may haue the glory, and the sinner his deserued shame.

3. Thirdly, those that Pharisaically stand vpon their owne righteousnesse, and haue got a whorish forehead to defend their sins; this

this is that corruption wee haue drawne from our first Parents. How did *Adam* post off the matter to his Wife, when the Lord expostulated the matter with him; *The woman* (saith he) *whom thou gauest me, she gaue me of the fruit, and I did eate.* And the woman, she laid the blame vpon the Serpent, and thus sinne is poasted off from one to another. Thus is it now, no sinne can be so vile, but men are ready to plead for it, and therein hold a buckler ouer Sathans head, for feare he should receiue a blow. Drunkennesse, say they, is but good fellowship, whordome and vncleanenesse but a tricke of youth, couetousnesse and vsury but good husbandry: Thus pay they one debt with another, and by excusing and defending of sinne, make themselues more inexcusable, and their sinnes

Gen. 3. 12. 13.

Culpa cum defenditur geminatur.

vnpardonable.

And yet we haue a fourth ſort of wicked men, that out-ſtrip all that went before, and they are ſuch who are ſo farre from confeſſing their ſins, as that they brag and boaſt of their vile abhominations; how they layd vp ſuch and ſuch to ſleepe at ſuch a time, what pranks they plaid elſewhere, ſome for Drunkenneſſe, ſome for vncleaneneſſe, ſome for one wickedneſſe, and ſome for another, *who glory in their ſhame*, and whoſe damnation doth not ſleepe. From whence ſhould I fetch the charitie to hope of the conuerſion and ſaluation of ſuch a one? Surely if the Lord giue not a great meaſure of repentance, the very blackneſſe of darkeneſſe is reſerued for ſuch at the iudgement of the laſt day.

Vſe 3. And laſt of all this may ſerue to exhort vs, that wee would euery one

one in the feare of God, seeke to get to our selues this testimony of our vnfained conuersion; By making a hearty confession of our sinnes vnto God. *Not euery one that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdome of heauen*, saith our Sauiour: it is not euery slight confession of sinne that will serue the turne; nothing is more common in the world, then to heare men say, I am a sinner, and all men are sinners, and the like, these are growne words of course; this and more then this hath been the confession of *Cain, Pharaoh, Saul, Iudas, &c.* and yet were damned: if then we would speed better then these did, we must learne to confesse better then they did. And that we may doe so, regard is to be had vnto three particulars.

Properties of true confession.

First, that our confession of sin proceed from a good ground,

from a heart that is truely humbled, and broken in the sence of sinne. For there is nothing can be more acceptable vnto God, then the heartie confession of a sinner, a confession that comes from a broken heart: So *Dauid*, *A broken and contrite heart, O God thou wilt not despise.* Such was the confession of the Publican, *God bee mercifull to me a sinner.* He fetched vp his conuersion from his heart. That confession of sinne that comes but from the mouth, and not from the heart, returneth vnto vs againe emptie, without comfort, being in Gods esteeme but a maymed sacrifice, a lame offering that is not accepted with him; and hence it is that all those formall confessions of hypocrites and wicked men, that onely in times of aduersitie, haue fled to God, and confessed their sinnes, when

Psal. 51. 17

I It must be hearty.

when the rod of God hath beene vpon them, as vpon *Pharaoh*, *Saul*, *Iudas*, &c. and that for feare of further punishment, and not out of hatred against sinne, hath beene in Gods esteeme most abhominable, no way mouing the Lord to pittie, nor to compassionate his creature in their misery.

Secondly, in the confession of our sins, it is requisite that wee should come to particulars, not summing them vp together in a grosse summe, but laying them open in the speciall kindes thereof; euen as a Patient that is sicke, layes open vnto the Physitian, euery particular of his infirmitie, in what place the griefe is, in what manner it holdeth him, when and how he is troubled; and thus haue the seruants of God done in their confession of sin, and haue found comfort therein: thus *Dauid*,

2 We must confesse our particular sins.

Psal.51. 4. *Against thee haue I sinned, and done this euill in thy sight.* Dauid did not post off the matter with a generall acknowledgement, wee are all sinners, and so am I, but he confesseth his particular sins, and prayeth God to deliuer him from Verse 14. *bloud-guiltinesse*: So likewise in that fact of his in numbring of 2 Sam. 24. 10. the people, *I haue sinned exceedingly in that I haue done.* So *Paul* confesseth, that hee was a *Persecutor*, a *Blasphemer*, and an 1 Tim. 1. 13 *Oppressor*. And no question this was the reason why *Peter* in that Sermon of his vnto the Iewes, pressed so hard vpon this poynt, Acts 2. 23: 35. *Ye are they which haue crucified the Lord of life*; That hereby hee might bring them to the knowledge and acknowledgement of their speciall sins. This is it that wounds the heart to the quicke, humbles the soule, and giues

sound

ſound teſtimony that the repentance of ſuch a one is true and vnfained. And this is it indeed, that puts the difference betweene that formall confeſsion of ſins that is to be ſeene in hypocrites and wicked men, who will not ſticke at a generall acknowledgement of ſin, as wee haue heard before, whereas the godly Chriſtian, and penitent ſoule, is ready to charge himſelfe before God with the particulars of his faylings, and diſobedience before him.

3 A reſolution for the time to come to forſake ſinne.

Thirdly, vnto true confeſsion, there muſt bee ioyned a purpoſe and reſolution in heart for the time to come, to leaue and forſake ſinne: for this is all in all in the matter of confeſsion, for otherwiſe wicked men themſelues haue gone very farre in the bare duty of confeſsion. No queſtion *Cain*, *Pharaoh*, *Saul*, *Iudas*, for the

the matter of confeſsion did it very freely; yea, they could very willingly haue confeſſed much more againſt themſelues, when the iudgements of God were vpon them, and their conſciences were vpon the racke. But this proceeded not out of indignation againſt ſin, as diſpleaſing vnto God, but out of the ſence of their preſent miſery, as it may appeare by their relaps into the ſame ſins, when Gods hand was remoued.

Confeſſio ſine emendatione eſt profeſſio peccati.

That confeſsion of ſin was neuer ſound, that produceth no change nor alteration in the life of the confeſſor. *Let the wicked forſake his wayes, and the vnrighteous his owne imaginations, and returne vnto the Lord, &c.* It is an excellent thing with good *Senacherib* ſo to confeſſe, as that wee may make a couenant and league with the Lord, neuer to haue to doe a-

Eſay 55. 7.

Ezra 10. 23

gaine

gaine with those sins wee haue made confession of vnto him. This is the condition *Samuel* makes with the people, *If yee bee come againe vnto the Lord with all your heart, put away* (saith hee) the strange gods from amongst you. And this hath beene euer the blessed fruit of sound confession of sin, and of true conuersion vnto God in all Gods people. 1 Sam. 7. 3

Iustly punished, for wee receiue the due reward of our deeds. *Text.*

How farre this Penitent chargeth himselfe in regard of his sin, we haue heard before in his heartie confession of the same. 2 Cleareth Gods iustice.

The next remarkable thing to bee obserued in this Text, is his subscribing vnto that their deserued punishment. *We are iustly punished, for wee receiue the due reward*

reward of our deeds.

q. d. Thou art greatly deceiued to thinke that becauſe wee three do ſuffer puniſhment alike, that therefore our deſerts are all alike, no, *This man hath done nothing amiſſe*, or worthy of this death, for he ſuffereth as an innocent; But we for our parts, ſuffer righteouſly, and by reaſon of our euill deeds that we haue done, receiue but our deſerts.

Behold we here againe another admirable fruit of his repentance, and conuerſion vnto God, that he can and doth ſo readily and willingly ſubſcribe vnto his deſerued puniſhment, without any manner of grudging or repining. And herein alſo will teach all men vnto the end of the world,

Doct. Godly ſubmit themſelues.o

That Gods children, when once they come truly and thorowly to bee conuinced of ſinne, ſubmit

submit themselues to Gods seuerest corrections without grudging or repining. This *Penitent Thiefe* herein may be a liuely patterne and example of the true disposition that is in euery true conuert. That when they shall once come truly to see sinne, they can with all readinesse submit themselues vnto Gods seuerest corrections without repining, acknowledging that therein the Lord is most iust and righteous: thus this Penitent here, howsoeuer, saith he, our punishment be sharpe and shamefull, bitter and cruell, yet our mouthes are stopped, and we haue nothing to plead for our selues: *For we receiue the due reward of our deeds.* He acknowledgeth the Lord to be iust and righteous in laying of that punishment vpon them. This disposition we finde to haue been in

God seuerest corrections without repining.

in *Iob*, who being laid in the dust, and brought full low, by reason of Gods hand; This is recorded to his euerlasting praise: *In all this did not Iob sinne, nor charge God foolishly.* That is, he did not any way question Gods iustice, in dealing so seuerely with him. I do not deny but that some weaknes did breake out from him that way, as it doth many times in the best of Gods seruants, but this was at that time when the burthen of his sorrowes did oppresse him; but hee afterwards corrects his errour, *Once haue I spoken* (saith he) *but I will answer no more.*

Iob 1.22.

Iob 39.37.

This we may see in *Hezekiah*, who when the Prophet *Isaiah* had denounced the Lords iudgement against him, namely, that all those goodly treasures that he, in the pride of his heart, had shewed vnto the Embassiadours of the king

Isa.39.8.

King of *Babylon*, ſhould be carried away into *Babylon*, doth hee repine and murmure againſt the Prophet for this tidings? Doth he any way go about to excuſe his fact, that it was but that Courtlike entertainment fit for an Embaſſadour of ſo great a Prince, or the like. Surely no, but hee buckels handſomely to the iudgement threatned, being conſcious vnto his owne ſinne, and ſaith, *The word of the Lord is good that thou haſt ſpoken.* Excellent to this purpoſe is that of the Prophet *Dauid*, when *Nathan* the Lords Prophet had denounced thoſe ſeuerall iudgements againſt him and his houſe, that the Infant conceiued in adultery ſhould die, that his owne wiues ſhould be defiled, that the ſword ſhould neuer depart from his houſe. How doth *Dauid* behaue himſelfe in the middeſt

middest of all these iudgements threatened, doth hee complaine that the Lord dealt hardly with him? No. But falls to the confession of his fault, taking all vpon himselfe, accusing himselfe, and excusing the Lord, *Against thee onely haue I sinned, and done this euill in thy sight.* And the reason hereof is added, *That thou mightest be iust when thou speakest, and true when thou iudgest.*

Psal. 51. 4.

q. d. I dare not say, that thou hast in the least respect dealt hardly with mee, insomuch as I haue deserued that all these iudgements should light vpon mee: Euen so at other times when hee tasted of Gods rod. Neuer childe was more submisse to the corrections of a Father, then *Dauid* was. Memorable is that speech of his, *I know, O Lord, that thy iudgements are good, and that thou of very*

Psal. 119. 75.

very faithfulneſſe haſt cauſed mee to be troubled.

To this accordeth the example of old *Eli*, when *Samuel* told him, *That the Lord would do a thing in Iſrael, that whoſoeuer ſhould heare thereof his eares ſhould tingle.* 1 Sam. 3. 18. Meaning indeed the iudgement the Lord would bring vpon him and his houſe: how doth he behaue himſelfe vnder this heauie denunciation threatned, *It is the Lord* (ſaith hee) *let him do as it pleaſeth him.* By which anſwer of his, we may collect how ſenſible he was of his own ſin, in his indulgent behauiour towards his ſons, & takes the ſame as a iuſt puniſhment from heauen vpon the ſame.

Of this ſpirit, no doubt, ſauours that of the *Prodigal, I will go to my Father, and I will ſay vnto him, Father, I haue ſinned againſt heauen, and before thee, I am no* Luk. 15.

more worthy to be called thy seruant. Reade wee ouer the prayers of Gods Church and people, at such times as Gods wrath hath broken out vpon them, and his iudgements haue layne heauie vpon them. Haue they not still acknowledged the Lord to bee most iust? Thus *Ezra* in the behalfe of the people. *Now our God what shall we say, for wee haue forsaken thy commandements.* Thus *Nehemiah, Surely thou art iust in all that is come vpō vs.* Thus *Daniel, O Lord righteousnes belongs vnto thee, but vnto vs shame.* Yea *Micah* personating the whole Church and people of God, in times of great affliction and sore aduersity. *I will beare with patience the wrath of the Lord, because I haue sinned against him.* By which examples and diuers more of that kinde, recorded in Gods Booke, we may see the propertie of a true conuert,

Ezra 9.10

Neh. 9.33.

Dan. 9.7.

Mich. 7.9.

and of an heart truly humbled for sinne, it can willingly and readily take all vpon it selfe, and still acquite the Lord of iniustice, or hard dealing, when his iudgements lie most heauie vpon them. Whereas on the contrary, if we looke vpon the behauiour of wicked men, when the Lord most iustly hath ouertaken them in their wickednesse, we shall heare them grudging, repining, and complaining, as if the Lord were not iust in punishing them so seuerely: *My punishment* (saith *Cain*) *is greater then I can beare.* Gen. 4. 13.

Saul, can plead for himselfe, as if his punishmene were not iust. 1. Sam. 15. 20.

And so the Prophet *Malachy* brings in the wicked pleading against God: *Wherein haue we despised thy Name? or wherein haue we beene foes against him?* Mal. 1. 6. As if the Prophet had taken his ayme

amisse, and done them great wrong, to charge them on that wise. O the wickednesse that is in an impenitent heart! The point is cleare and plaine, the reasons briefely are,

Reas. I. First, his word and spirit hath informed the iudgements of his seruants, teaching them how to conceiue of the Lords distribution of his iudgements, that are executed vpon them, that the Lord therein cannot but bee iust.

Psal. 62 12. *Hee rewardeth euery man according to his workes*, saith the Psalmist. God doth not proceed against any in iudgement vpon malice, or vpon suspition, but vpon iust ground, before whom all things are open and naked. And hence is it that the Lord pleads this his integritie and iustice against the people of Israel, *Are*

Ezek 18.2. *not my wayes equall? and are not*

your

your wayes vnequall?

Secondly, the conscience of their owne sinne causeth them to iustifie the Lord, and to accuse themselues, *I was dumbe* (saith *Dauid*) *and opened not my mouth because thou didst it.* 2 Psal. 39.9.

And againe, *My soule keepeth silence vnto God.* The godly cannot but know, that they are their sinnes that haue prouoked God to anger, and prouoked him to displeasure. *Man suffereth for his sinne.* And the consideration hereof doth humble them, and cause them to beare with patience the Lords corrections. Lam. 3.39

Seeing then in this Penitent Theefe acknowledging that his punishment to be so iust, we haue beene taught the propertie of a true Conuert, namely, to submit to Gods seuerest corrections without grudging or repining; *Vse* 1.

Hereby then we may take good triall of the integritie of our owne hearts, and of the truth of our owne repentance. Hath the hand of God beene vpon vs at any time in any kinde, whether on our bodies by long and tedious ſickneſſe, or any other miſery on our goods, names, eſtates, of what kinde ſoeuer, how haue we behaued our ſelues, and beene affected vnder the ſame? Corrupt nature in this caſe will be ready to ſtand vpon tearmes of iuſtification, as if wee were hardly dealt withall. But a ſanctified ſpirit and gracious heart can willingly ſtoope vnto God, and ſay with *Hezekiah, The word of the Lord is good, which thou haſt ſpoken.* And with good *Nehemiah, Lord thou art iuſt in all that is come vpon vs.*

Iſai 39.8.

Neh. 9.33.

If in times of affliction and aduerſitie, wee haue behaued our ſelues

selues in this sort; This is a good testimonie vnto our owne hearts, of the true humiliation and conuersion of the same vnto God. But if on the contrary part vpon triall had, we finde that we were neuer yet so sensible of our sinnes, nor apprehensiue of our misery, to know and acknowledge that we haue deserued at Gods hand his sharpest plagues, and seuerest corrections, so that in the middest of them all wee could say, *It is the Lords mercy we are not consumed*; We can haue no sound comfort in our soules, that the true worke of grace & conuersion is wrought in vs. Lam. 3. 39.

Secondly, this may teach vs in all our afflictions to labour with our selues, to see that sinne is the cause thereof, and to learne to profit thereby to amendment of life, for such men are farre enough 2

from repentance and true conuersion, which goe on sleepily in a course of life, and are not humbled when the Lord correcteth.

3 And last of all wee are taught here, euen in our sharpest afflictions, still to iustifie God, and to acknowledge that he is euer iust in his iudgements, before whom the most holy that are, cannot be innocent.

Text. *But this man hath done nothing amisse.*

3. Iustifieth Christs innocency

In these words wee haue the third proofe that manifesteth the truth of this Penitents conuersion, and that is his iustifying of Christs innocency. *This man hath done nothing amisse.* And this is that fift and last Argument that hee vseth to his fellow, to dissuade him from reproaching

5 Argument. *Ab innocentia Christi.*

of

of Christ, and so to stop him in his course of sin, and this is taken from Christs innocency.

2. d. Wretched man that thou art, thinkest thou that because this man suffereth the like punishment with thee and me, that therefore his cause was alike? no, *Wee are iustly punished.* The most righteous God hath now iustly ouertaken vs in our sinfull and wretched course of life, and now wee reape but the iust reward of our owne workes. But this man, what euill hath he done? he suffereth as an innocent, he hath done nothing worthy this cursed death. And herein as before, wesee the admirable fruit of his faith and repentance, that now at this time, when all mocked Christ, *Pilate* condemneth him, *Iudas* betrayeth him, the Disciples forsake him, and *Peter* denyeth him, that now

at

at this time he should stick thus to Christ, and acknowledge his Deity in the lowest degree of his humiliation; this was the fruit of an admirable faith indeed: whose example may commend vnto all men a most necessary duty.

Doct: A true Christian must at all times speake for Christ.

That euery faithfull Christian should bee ready at all times to speake for Christ, to stand vp in the defence of the truth, and not to suffer his name to bee blasphemed, nor his word or truth to be dishonoured. And surely the circumstance of time makes much for the commendations of the faith of this man, that now that Christ was so vilified, condemned, despised, put to this cruell shamefull, ignominious and reproachfull death, that in this so low a degree of his humiliation, he should acknowledge his God-head, and stand vp in the defence thereof.

This

This must needs be an admirable fruit of a singular faith.

This made much for the commendations of the Church of *Pergamus*, that shee held fast Christs Name, and denyed not the faith, *Euen where Sathan had his throne.* So when religion is euery where despised, then to loue it with *Dauid*, is a blessing of blessings; with *Noah*, to bee vpright, and of good conuersation, *when all flesh had corrupted their wayes*, this was praise-worthy with God; when idolatry and all manner of superstition and prophaneneſſe doth abound, is maintained, graced, countenanced, then to keepe vp the pure worship of God with *Eliah*, where there could not be found that had not bowed the knee to *Baal*; this must needs shew admirable fortitude. Thus must all Gods people doe, confesse

Reu. 2. 12. 13.

Gen. 6.

confesse and professe Christ, not onely in prosperous times, and in times of prosperity, whilest religion is graced and countenanced by authoritie, but euen at such times also when it seemeth to be most dangerous. It is an easie matter to professe the Gospell in prosperous times, whilest wee haue winde and tide with vs; but then is the truth of our profession manifested in times of aduersitie. The field proueth the Souldier, the Marriners skill is best seene in a tempest, so is the truth of a Christian profession, in the times of the hottest persecution. And hence is it that our Sauiour doth acquaint his Disciples aforehand of those troubles that should happen vnto them, to the end they should not giue backe, but confesse him to the end. And how resolute the Apostles were, this

Mat: 24.

way,

way, we may see afterwards, who being conuented before the Councell, and commanded to Preach no more in the name of *Iesus*, answered thus, *Whether it bee right in the sight of God, to hearken vnto you, more then vnto God, iudge ye.* So *Paul*, when *Agabus* through the spirit of prophecy, had told him of the troubles that should befall him at Ierusalem, his friends began to dissuade him from going vp thither, to the intent he might escape that danger, but behold that godly resolution of that holy seruant of God. *What doe yee weeping and breaking my heart? I am ready not to be bound onely, but also to dye at Ierusalem, for the Name of the Lord Iesus.* Act. 4. 18. 19. Act. 21. 13.

We may see this againe in those three worthies mentioned in *Daniel*, who held out the light of their

Dan. 3. their holy profession, not onely when they were in fauour with the King, but euen at that time also when the furnace was making ready to consume them. This was also the godly resolution and practise of *Daniel* himselfe, not to shrinke backe, but to goe on in his godly course, euen to the extreme hazard of his owne life.

And for this wee haue a cloud of testimonies by the Apostle vnto the Hebrewes, of whom he speaketh thus, *Some were racked,*

Heb. 11. 35 *some tormented and afflicted, not accepting deliuerance, that they might obtain a better resurrection.* And this is obserued to haue been the great weakenesse of the Apo-

Mat. 26. 70 stle *Peter*, that when Christ was apprehended, hee being in the High Priests Hall, should so shamefully deny Christ, and that at the voyce of a silly Girle. And

of

of *Nichodemus*, that howsoeuer he had a great loue to Christ, yet was ouer-awed by the Iewes, that he durst not come to Christ in the day time, but in the night, whereas true faith surmounts all the difficulties of this life, rests only vpon Gods promises, and is content to follow Christ, euen to the top of Mount Caluary, there to suffer with him. And great reason, Ioh. 3.

For first this argueth Christian courage and resolution, an excellent ornament in a Christian, and that such a one is mortified vnto the world, in as much as hee is content to hazard all, and to part with all rather then to lose Christ. *Reas.* 1. And indeed the Christian herein can sustaine no losse, but great aduantage. *Hee that loseth his life* (saith Christ) *for my sake, shall finde it:* and againe, *whosoeuer shall confesse me before men, him will I* Mat. 10. 32

confesse

confesse also before my Father which is in heauen: but whosoeuer shal deny me before men, him also will I deny before my Father which is in heauē

2 Secondly, this is it that distinguisheth betweene the true Christian, and the carnall professor, the former is not ashamed of Christ, but continueth with him in temptations, the other *in time of temptation falleth away*. Many could be content to follow Christ with *Zebedees* sons, so long as Christ hath any temporall honour to giue, but to pledge Christ in the bitter cup of affliction, & to take vp his Crosse and to follow him, this proues a hard saying, *who can beare it?*

Luk. 22. 28. Mat. 13.

Vse 1. This shewes then first of all, the diuelish policy of those that would bee Christians, and make profession of religion, yet thinke it wisedome to sleepe in a whole skin.

skin. In peaceable times they will seeme very forward and zealous professors, but when any trouble shall arise for the truths sake, most shamefully pull in their heads againe. Many such cold friends hath Christ and his truth now a dayes, like *Ioseph* of Arimathea, who was one of Christs Disciples, but hee carried his religion secretly and couertly for feare of the Iewes. And as the Parents of the blinde man, to whom Christ had giuen sight, he durst not confesse all that hee knew of Christ, he was ouer-awed likewise by the Iewes. And thus is it with many a man, the feare of their Landlord, or some great man in the Country that is a Papist or an Atheist, vpon whom he hath some dependency, & whose displeasure he is not able to beare, doth make him pull in his head, that he dares

Ioh. 19. 38

Io. 9.

not bee too forward that way. Theſe men are like Symon of Cyrene, who bare the Croſſe, but ſuffered nothing: So theſe weare the cognizance of Chriſt, but will ſuffer nothing for Chriſt. O this is a grieuous and a feareſull ſinne, I would commend vnto ſuch a one, theſe places of Scripture to bee duely thought vpon.

Heb. 10. 38 *The iuſt ſhall liue by faith, but if any man draw backe, my ſoule ſhall haue no pleaſure in him.*

Reu. 21. 8. *The feareſull and vnbeleeuing ſhall haue their portion in the lake which burneth with fire and brimſtone, which is the ſecond death.*

Mar. 8. 38. *Whoſoeuer ſhall bee aſhamed of me, and of my words, among this adulterous and ſinfull generation, him ſhall the ſonne of man be aſhamed of when hee commeth in the glory of his Father, with all his holy Angels.*

O that these things were duely thought vpon, how would they make vs tremble to consider how vpon euery light occasion we are ready to pull in our heads, euery threat, euery mocke and disgrace, euery frowne of a mortall man, that is but dust, is ready to make vs stagger in the good way of righteousnesse, and to abate our zeale in our holy profession. An euident demonstration, that the zeale of the Lords house hath not yet consumed vs.

Secondly, learne from this Penitent thus, clearing Christs innocency, pleading his cause, and acknowledging his *Deitie*, when all besides scorned and derided him, neuer to thinke thou hast profited aright in the Schoole of Christ, if either *feare*, or *shame* abate thy zeale, or cause thee to deny that truth thou hast pro- 2

fessed, or any way to estrange thy selfe from the professours of the same; especially in time of their afflictions. It was *Moses* praise, and an argument of his loue to God and his people, that he could chuse rather to share with them in their present afflictions, then to enioy the pleasures in *Pharaohs* Court. There is no one thing that doth yeeld more sound comfort vnto a mans owne soule then this, that he hath stood for Christ and his truth; and howsoeuer such a one may meet with troubles and persecutions here, hee is faithfull that hath promised, *Great shall be your reward in heauen.* *He that loseth his life for my sake shall finde it*, saith Christ. And therefore as *Cæsars* eye made his Souldiers prodigall of their blood: so Gods eye that alwayes is vpon vs, and his cause which principal-

Heb. 11. 25

Mat. 5. 12.

ly ought to affect vs, should cause vs stand to his truth aboue our owne credit, libertie, life, and all.

But this man hath done nothing amisse. *Text.*

It came not to passe but by an extraordinarie prouidence that this *Penitent Theefe* should in this wise giue testimony vnto Christs innocency, especially at this time of his wonderfull abasement, when all contemned and despised him, *Iudas* betrayeth, *Pilate* condemneth, the Scribes and Pharisees, and Elders mocke and reuile him, the common people and passers by wagge their heads at him, the other Thiefe reproacheth him, yet in the middest of them all here is one that will take his death on it, that Christ dyed an Innocent. Note we hence,

That in all ages, and from time

In all ages God hath had some witnesses of his truth.

to time, God hath had some that haue giuen testimonie vnto his truth. At all times hee hath had some to defend him, and cleare his innocency: in times of the hotest persecution some that sticke fast to the truth, when others denie him.

No doubt this could not but be a corrasiue at the very heart of the high Priest and Elders, and people that pursued Christ to his death, to haue this man rise to acknowledge Christ. For it is commonly a matter of great weight whereon one taketh his death.

So in rebuking, exhorting, admonishing, or any other dutie, when one vrgeth it dying, it leaues the greater impression behinde it. The brethren of *Ioseph* can pleade this to their brother: *Thy father* (say they) *commanded a little be-*

Gen. 50. 16

fore

fore his death, that thou shouldest forgiue the trespasse of thy brethren. Here we haue the last words of a dying man, now leauing the world and going to giue vp his last account, and behold this is the testimonie he giues of Christ, *This man hath done nothing amisse.*

When Gods truth hath beene most of all oppugned and resisted, God hath had at all times some witnesses of his truth. When *Antichrist* should most of all flourish, *I will giue power* (saith the Lord) *vnto my two witnesses, &c.* Let *Ieremy* be cast into the dunge̅, the Lord hath a *Ebedmelech* to plead his cause to the King, and to be a meanes of his delivery. If the Scribes and Phariſees go about to condemne Christ, *Nicodemus* will plead his cause whatsoeuer come of it. Let Christ be mocked

Reu.11.3.

Ie.38.8.

and derided of all, yet this poore
Luk. 23.50 Penitent confesseth him to be the
Lord of life, and will take his
death vpon it, that Christ dyeth
an Innocent. Yea when they sat
in councell to condemne Christ,
there is in the company one *Ioseph* a good man and a iust, *That consented not vnto his death.*
When Christ was risen againe
from the dead, he appeares to the
two Disciples that went from *Ierusalem* to *Emaus*, that they
might giue testimonie of the truth
of the same. So are *Mary Magdalene*,
Luk. 24. and *Mary the mother of Ioses*,
made witnesses likewise of the
truth thereof. And for the further
clearing of this truth, the Apostle
1. Cor. 15. 6 *Paul* saith, *He was seene of more then fiue hundred brethren at once.*
The Reasons are:

Reas. 1. First, the Lord will haue wisdome to bee iustified of her chil-

dren;

dren, though others regard it not, and his truth to flourish and to remaine to posterities. *All flesh* (saith the Apostle) *is grasse, and the glory of man as the flowre of the field: The grasse withereth, the flower fadeth away, but the word of the Lord endureth for ever.* 1 Pet. 1. 24.

Secondly, he it is that hath the hearts of all men in his hand, to turne them at his pleasure, and can when it pleaseth him, make of a persecuting *Saul*, a preaching *Paul*, and appoint him to bee a witnesse of his truth, to beare his Name vnto the Gentiles, that had beene a persecuter of the same, as Christ saith, *If these should hold their peace, the stones would cry.* Act. 9. 15. Luk. 19. 40

But why should Christ make choice of such meane witnesses to giue testimonie to him and his truth? *Quest.*

For

Answ. Why Christ chuseth such weake witnesses to giue testimony to him and his truth.

For two respects.

First, that he might haue the glory of the worke, who commonly chuseth the weake and foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and the mighty, putting this treasure in *earthen vessels*, that the power might be in God, and not in men.

Secondly, that there might appeare a cleare difference betwixt the kingdome of *Christ*, and the kingdome of *Antichrist*. The kingdome of Christ doth not stand in need of humane power, of earthly and carnall props to leane vpon, but is supported with Gods almighty power, which watcheth ouer it continually.

Whereas the kingdome of *Antichrist* must haue all the wit and policie of man to support it, *Equiuocation*, deuilish plots and practices, such as are, Gun-pow-

der

der Treasons, murthering of kings, &c. or else it could neuer stand.

This lets vs see the wonderfull care God hath of his Church and truth, that albeit they are both oppoſed by many and mighty enemies, yet hee is euer mindfull of his couenant and oath, that he made to a thousand generations. Yea when Popery most of all preuailed, what Instruments hath God stirred vp in all places, *in Spaine, Germany, Bohemia, England*, &c. to oppose that Antichristian pride. *Vse* 1.

As also to teach vs that when we shall see the Church of God in her wane, and the beautie & glory thereof eclipsed and ouershadowed, to rest vpon this, that God can neuer want instruments of the Churches deliuerie; he can make their enemies their friends: as here he 2

hee opened the mouth of this Theefe, to giue testimonie vnto Christ. As in the time of the Prophet *Elias*, the Lord had seuen thousand that neuer bowed the knee vnto *Baal*. Hee can neuer want mouthes to confesse him, that out of the mouthes of very babes & sucklings, ordaineth such strength to perfect his owne praise.

Hitherto of his speech to his Fellow, and therein of the three first testimonies of the truth of his Repentance and conuersion vnto God:

VERSE

VERSE 42.

And he said vnto Iesus, Lord remember me when thou comest into thy kingdome. Text.

FRom his speech to his fellow, rebuking him, and iustifying the Lord Iesus, he comes now to direct his suite to Christ, *Lord remember me*, &c.

It was a temporall deliuerance and corporall life the blasphemous Theefe desired, *Saue thy self and vs*: and because hee iudged Christ to be Man onely, and not God, and so not able to giue this, therefore he blasphemed him.

But the Penitent Theefe that liues by *faith*, and not by sence, beholds Christs glorious power, euen in this low degree of his humiliation, and through faith rai-

seth

seth vp himselfe to the hope of a better life. Not regarding so much a temporall life, or corporall deliuerance, so that it might go well with his soule in death; and therefore prayeth, *Lord remember me*, &c.

And herein, as before, he manifesteth likewise the admirable fruite of his faith and repentance; whether wee consider the condition of the person of this *Suppliecant*, or petitioner, or of *Christ* himselfe, to whom hee sues for mercy.

First, if we consider the *Suppliecant*, or petitioner himselfe, a man not trained vp in the Schoole of Christ, but rather in a denne of Theeues, a man giuen vnto all manner of *Rapine*, like a rauenous beast vpon the prey, liuing by cutting of throats, theft, and the bloud of men: for such a wretched

ed creature as this, to be brought at last to see his sinnes, and to repentance for the same, and to seek so earnestly for mercy for his soule, this must needs declare the almightie power of God.

Secondly, if we consider withall the condition of Christ himselfe at this time, to whom he directeth his sute, euen crucified Christ; Betrayed by *Iudas*, condemned by *Pilate*, mocked of *Priest* and *people*, denied by *Peter*, forsaken at this time of all his *Disciples*, for the Text saith, *They all forsooke him and fled.* At this time, I say, to acknowledge Christs *Deitie*, to performe diuine honour vnto him, by praying vnto him, was wonderfull indeed.

Had hee in times past heard Christ preach, and beene familiar with Christ, or his disciples, had he heard his heauenly word, or seene

seene those glorious miracles that hee had wrought. Haply there might haue beene wrought some grace in the heart, which howsoeuer it might be kept in for a time as fire raked vp in the ashes, yet now at last, at the time of his death might reuiue. As it was the case of *Peter*, who had forgot Christs words, which said, *Before the Cocke crow thou shalt deny mee thrice.* Yet afterwards the Text saith, *He remembred the words of Christ*: then had not this beene so much to bee wondred at. But this being the first meeting and greeting, the first sight he got of Christ, who suffered now the same cursed, shamefull, and ignominious death, together with him; this could not but make greatly for the commendations of his admirable faith.

Mat. 26.

Before wee come to the particular

cular handling of the words, wee haue a two-fold instruction to bee handled in generall.

First then wee may note, what a happy progresse this Penitent maketh in the wayes of godlinesse, and in the worke of repentance. He groweth vp still in Christ, and goeth on from vertue to vertue, and from one measure and degree of grace vnto another, as it were by steps and stayers ascending vp into Gods kingdome: first, hee rebuketh is fellow: secondly, confesseth their sinnes: thirdly, cleareth Christs innocency: And now againe maketh earnest supplication vnto him, and herein will teach vs,

Doct. 1. True grace is known by the growth in grace.

That a daily growth and increase in grace is necessary vnto saluation. True grace will shew it selfe by the daily growth in the measure and degrees thereof.

Where grace is well vſed, it will increaſe. It is not with grace, as it is with the materiall things of this life, the more they are vſed, the more they decay; but grace is of a generatiue nature, one grace well vſed, and rightly improued, brings forth another: *We glory in tribulation* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *knowing that tribulation worketh patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not aſhamed.* This duty of daily growth and increaſe in grace, is often vrged and preſſed in the Scriptures: *We beſeech you brethren, and exhort you in the Lord Ieſus, that ye increaſe more and more:* So *Peter, grow in grace,* and againe, *Let vs be led forward towards perfection. A wiſe man will heare and increaſe in learning,* ſaith *Salomon.* Gods Church in the Scripture is compared to an

Rom. 5. 3. 4.

1 Theſ. 4. 4

2 Pet. 3. 18

Heb. 6. 1.

Pro. 1. 5.

Orchard

Orchard or a *Garden*, the Miniſters of the Word are Planters and Waterers, and all the faithfull are trees of righteouſneſſe, and ſuch as are thus planted *in the Courts of the Lords houſe, they bring forth much fruit in their age, and are fat and well liking.* Pſal.92.14

The bleſſing vpon the Creatures was *increaſe and multiply.* Euen ſo the bleſſing on the new Creatures is, *Grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Sauiour Ieſus Chriſt.* Gen. 1.22. 2 Pet.3.18

This is excellently ſhadowed out vnto vs by *Ezechiels* viſion of waters, which increaſed more and more, which ſhadoweth out vnto vs the power of the Word in the hearts of beleeuers in the time of the Goſpell. And whereſoeuer theſe waters ſhould come, they ſhould cauſe admirable fruitfulneſſe. And this is that which our Ezc.47.12.

Sauiour noteth, that his Father is the Husband-man, himselfe the Vine, euery true beleeuer, a branch of this Vine. *And such* (saith he) *my Father purgeth, that they may bring forth more fruit.* Ioh. 15. 1. *Salomon* cõpareth the righteous to the Sun *that shineth more and more vnto the perfect day.* Pro. 4. 18. The poynt is clear, neither is there any duty whereunto a Christian is more vrged and pressed in the Scripture then this. And the reasons are,

Reas. 1. First, in regard that the greatest measure of grace that the faithfull in this life can possibly attaine vnto, is not more then needfull to saluation. As the least measure of sanctifying grace, truely wrought, shall be auaileable vnto saluation; so the greatest measure that any haue, will but serue the turne: It is with grace, as with the Manna the Israelites gathered, none had to spare of that they gathered. So

the time will come, when he that hath the greateſt meaſure of knowledge, faith, repentance, &c. ſhall finde the ſame little enough to keepe the head aboue the water, when a man ſhall come to combate with death, *The king of feares*, and to wreſtle with Sathans temptations.

Secondly, ſuch as improue their graces receiued, the Lord is pleaſed daily to adde to the ſtocke of grace, making them more and more to abound therein, as ſaith our Saniour, *To him that hath, ſhall be giuen*, whereas wicked and vngodly men, which haue but the out-ſide of religion onely, the Lord will take from ſuch *that they ſeemed to haue.* 2 Luk. 8. 18.

Thirdly, the great coſt the Lord is daily at with vs, may prouoke vnto this duty. Firſt, hee bought vs at a deare rate, from 3

our sinfull, vile, and vaine conuersations, to the end we might serue him in righteousnesse and holinesse all our dayes. Againe, hee hath planted vs by the *riuers of waters*, euen his sacred Word, with the dayly dewes, and spirituall moysture flowing from the same, he daily watereth our soules. Besides all this, hee hath come vnto vs with the pruning knife of his iudgements, and corrections of all sorts, both nationall and personall, to shred off sinne and corruption, and so many superfluous and luxurious branches, that hinder fruitfulnesse; so as the Lord may plead with vs as with his people of old, *What should I haue done more that I haue not done?* All which may prouoke vnto this duty.

Esay 5.

4. And last of all, the Scripture compareth a Christian to *new borne*

borne Babes. As new borne Babes, desire yee the sincere milke of the Word, that ye may grow thereby. 1 Pet. 2. 2.
Now infancy and childhood of all other ages, is an age of growing. It were a wonder in nature, to haue an infant liue, and not grow: the Word truely heard and receiued, breeds no such starue-lings.

Againe, the Scripture compares a Christian to a *building*. Now what is it to lay a foundation of a worke, and not to build vpon it? If it bee not followed, wee see it comes to nothing. Thus is it with the building vp of the inward man.

Is this daily increase & growth in grace so necessary, as that without it we can haue no sound comfort of the truth of grace? Miserable then and fearefull is the state and condition of those, that haue *Vse 1.*

loſt their firſt loue, and haue fallen away from that meaſure of loue, zeale, and other graces, that appeared in them in times paſt? Surely the eſtate of ſuch men is lamentable and fearefull. *If they* (ſaith *Peter*) *after they haue eſcaped from the filthineſſe of the world, through the acknowledging of the Lord and Sauiour Iesus Christ, are yet tangled againe therein, and ouercome, the latter end is worſe with them, then the beginning; for it had beene better for them not to haue acknowledged the way of righteouſneſſe, then after they haue knowledged it, to turne away from the holy Commandement giuen vnto them, but it is come vnto them according to the Prouerbe, The dog is turned vnto his owne vomit, and the ſow that was waſhed, to the wallowing in the mire.* This was the caſe of *Demas*, *Hymeneus*,

2 Pet. 2. 20, 21, 22.

Hymeneus, and *Philetus*, mentioned by *Paul* to *Timothy*; they were counted famous in their times, yet at last fell away. But woe bee vnto Sathan for his malice, and woe bee vnto such men for their backsliding, the estate of such is fearefull. 1 Tim. 1 20 2 Tim. 2.

Secondly, this serues to condemne the common securitie of men in these dayes and times wherein wee liue, who are strongly perswaded in themselues, that they haue attayned to a sufficiency in religion for knowledge and grace, they haue plyed it hitherto, and now they may sit still, as if they had as much as they needed, or God could require at their hands. Lamentable is their estate, and wofull is their condition. Of all the diseases of the Asian Churches, this was the most dangerous that the Church of *Laodi-* 2

cea

ces was ſick withall, who thought themſelues rich, and increaſed in wealth, and needed nothing, no more knowledge, no more grace: whereas indeed they were miſerable, poore, and blinde, and naked, the very opinion of ſufficiency ſhewes our penury.

Doſt thou put forth thy childe to Nurſe, thou deſireſt that it ſhould thriue and proſper, and not ſtand at a ſtay; if it proſper not, euery one will ſay, the childe will not continue long. Thus is it with vs, when the Lord ſhall feede vs with the wholſome milke of the Word, and we daily lugge the breaſts of our Mother the Church, and yet profit not, but ſtand rather at a ſtay, as ignorant as before, as dull, heauy, and vntoward in holy performances as before. O this is a fearefull ſigne of a ſpirituall conſumption: and this

this wee may feare will follow in the end, that God at last will bee prouoked to giue such a one ouer to hardnesse of heart, and to reprobate sence, that haue made no better a vse of the grace that hath beene offered vnto them.

3 And last of all, it may serue for matter of comfort and consolation vnto the godly, that are on the mending hand, though they finde many defects and imperfections in them, and be often drawn aside through their owne corruptions, yet the increase in knowledge, zeale, loue, and the like graces, proues the truth thereof in the heart.

Quest. But how shall I know whether I increase in grace yea or no?

Answ. Thou mayest know it by these signes.

1 First, by thy daily increase in humility, for *God resisteth the proud,*

proud, but giueth grace to the humble. Humility is a Mother-grace, as we thriue in it, we proſper in all other graces. Where is on the contrary, where pride groweth, it is like a noyſome weede in a garden, true grace doth there wither, and the beſt plants can neuer proſper.

2 Secondly, it is diſcerned by the conſcionable vſe of the meanes, by the which grace is daily more and more nouriſhed and increaſed in vs. Such as are the hearing of the Word, the conſcionable vſe of the Sacraments, prayer, with the conſcionable performance of theſe and the like holy duties, both publike and priuate, with a delight therein: this being thy caſe, thou needeſt no more queſtion the ſtate of thy ſoule all this while, then the ſtate of that body that hath a good appetite to meate, and

and withall a good digestion.

Thirdly, it may bee discerned in vs by the taste and relish wee haue in heauenly things, with the delight in Gods people, for the body of Christ increaseth in the edification of it self, through loue, and as this loue increaseth or decayeth, so doth grace. 3

VERSE 42.

And he said vnto Iesus, Lord remember me, &c. Text.

THe penitent Thiefe hauing giuen good testimony of his repentance for sinne, is now qualified to pray, for now is he humbled, made meeke and gentle, his heart is fitted and prepared for this duty. Note hence, that

None can pray aright, but the 2

Penitent,

None can make an effectuall prayer but the penitent. Iam. 5. 18 Psal. 32. 6.

Penitent, such as are truly and throughly humbled for sinne, these are qualified for this dutie. *The prayer of a righteous man availeth much*, saith Saint *Iames*. *Therefore shall every one that is godly make his prayer vnto thee.* It was the Church that made prayer vnto God for *Peter*. When the children of Israel had humbled themselues from morning vntill euening, and wept before the Lord, then were they qualified to aske *counsell of the Lord*.

Act. 12.

Iudg. 20. 23. 26.

Gen. 4. 4.

The Lord had respect to Abel and his offering: but vnto Cain and his offering had he not respect. *Abels* person was first accepted in Christ, before his sacrifice could be. This is that the Lord requireth of his people, *Wash you, make you cleane: put away your euils out of my sight*, &c. And then

Isa. 1. 16.

what

what followeth, *Come let vs now reason together, saith the Lord, though your sinnes were as scarlet, they shal be made as white as snow,* &c. As for the prayers of the wicked, *The sacrifice of the wicked is an abhomination vnto the Lord. But the prayer of the righteous is his delight. Though they cry vnto me, I will not heare them.* What might be the reason? see it in the verse going before: *They turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, which refused to heare my words.* The blinde man acknowledged this truth, *God heareth not sinners.* Whereas on the contrary, *A broken and contrite heart God will not despise. The prayers of the righteous are his delight.* And it must bee the supplication of *Iob*, that God will accept of in the behalfe of his friends. And there is reason for it.

Vers. 18. Pro. 15. 8. Hos. 7. 14. Ier. 11. 11. Iob. 9. 30. Psal. 51. 17 Prou. 15. 8. Iob 42. 8.

First,

Reaſ. 1. Mat 7.17

Firſt, that of our Sauiour, *A good tree* (ſaith he) *bringeth forth good fruit: but an euill tree bringeth forth euill fruit.* He muſt be a good man that maketh a good prayer, a bad man cannot make a good prayer. For ſuch as the root is, ſuch is the fruit.

2

Secondly, Gods fauour and countenance is onely and alwaies manifeſted there where his Image appeareth. Now it is onely in his children, who haue dedicated themſelues onely to him and his ſeruice.

3

Thirdly, it is the godly man that can ſpeake the language of heauen, hee hath the ſpirit of adoption giuen vnto him, enabling him to cry, *Abba*, Father. Now they muſt bee the breathings of Gods Spirit, which God will acknowledge: That is the language the which God doth vnderſtand

Rom. 8. 15.

Now

Now wicked men wanting this spirit, what reckoning & account can God make of the prayers of such a one?

Fourthly, *Whatsoeuer is not of faith is sinne.* And againe, *Without faith it is impossible to please God.* *Faith* is the *salt* of the Sanctuarie that must season all our sacrifices, and giues vs a comfortable assurance, that they shall finde acceptation with God. 4 Heb. 11.6.

That ye may beleeue in the name of the Sonne of God. And this is the assurance, that if we aske any thing according to his will, he heareth vs. *Faith* is all in all to make our prayers accepted. How many came to our Sauiour in the dayes of his flesh to bee cured, some of one disease, and some of another? And what is Christs answer, but this: *According to thy faith, so be it vnto thee.* Now *All men haue* 1.1oh. 5. 13.14. 2.Thes.3.2

not faith, saith the Apostle. It is called the *Faith of the elect*, because none are betrusted therewith but the elect of God: and so it must needs bee they, and they alone, that can pray effectually.

5. And last of all, they cannot be the prayers of wicked men that God can heare and accept of, because they haue refused to heare God, God will therefore refuse to heare them, *Because I haue called* (saith the Lord) *and ye haue refused: ye shall cry and call, and I will not answer.* And this stands with the distributiue Iustice of Almightie God, that God should deale with them as they haue dealt with him.

Pro. 1.24.

Vse 1. This serues then to set out vnto vs the misery of euery wicked and vngodly man, of euery impenitent sinner, that liues and lyes in sinne without repentance; God

is

is prouoked by him daily, his verie prayers themselues are turned into sinne. *He that turneth away his eare from hearing the law, euen his very prayers are abhominable.* Pro.28.9. The Lord doth ranke this mans prayers amongst the bed roll of his sinnes; Thou that art a drunkard, a swearer, a beastly liuer, thou that liuest and lyest in thy sinne without repentance, thou diddest neuer all the dayes of thy life make an effectuall prayer vnto God, the Lord neuer heard thee in mercy in any petition thou diddest euer put vp vnto him. But thy very praiers were euer turned into sin, and became abominable vnto him: thou wantest the Spirit of God to enable thee to this duty. For it is the breathing of that Spirit that God will acknowledge. O the misery of an impenitent sinner, that whether hee do

those things that are forbidden, or those things that are commanded, is still posting to hell, and hastening his owne destruction.

Obiect. If an impenitent sinner sinne thus euen in praying vnto God, it seemes then that it were better for a wicked man not to pray at all.

Answ. I say not so, albeit a wicked man sinne praying, because his person is not accepted with God in Christ, hath not repentance for sinne, nor faith in Christ, which must make his prayers auailable. Yet he must pray. The Lord declared by his Prophet how detestable the sacrifices of the people were vnto him: *My soule hateth your new Moones, and your appointed feasts*, &c. What then, must they obserue these solemne feasts no more, because the Lord hated them? No. What then?

Isa. 1. 14.

Take

Take away the euill of your doings from before my eyes. Repentance will remoue the cloud, and that partition wall that is betwixt God and vs, and giue our prayers accesse before him. Verſ. 16.

Secondly, this ſhewes the miſery of thoſe who truſt onely to their prayers, and other good deeds, as they ſay, to pacifie Gods wrath, to eſcape the vengeance to come, and to make amends for all their euill wayes. Though in the meane time their conſciences are defiled, their conuerſations are ſinfull, and which is worſt of all, their hearts are no way humbled for the ſame. Poore ſoules, doe they thinke the Lord will be beguiled thus? Thinke they that the Lord is driuen to ſuch a neceſſitie, that either he muſt take their ſeruice, or not to bee ſerued at all? No, no, the Lord hath Angels 2

end Saints to doe him seruice, though thou serue but for his iustice vpon whom he may glorifie himselfe in thy euerlasting confusion; and so will the Lord be glorified by the wicked at last.

3. Thirdly, this may serue to admonish vs all in the feare of God, that as we desire to bee heard in prayer, and to auoid this fearefull curse, to haue our prayers turned into sinne, that wee lay a good foundation with this *Penitent* here; By confessing our sinnes vnto God, by giuing good testimonie of our vnfained sorrow and repentance for them, with a godly resolution of newnesse of life. That wee first wash our hands, and so come to his Altar. For if wee regard wickednesse in our hearts, the Lord will not heare vs. Sinne stoppeth Gods eares, that he cannot heare, and is that cloud that hindereth

hindereth the acceſſe of them into his preſence. Now what can be more vncomfortable vnto the ſoule of man, then this? Not to be heard in miſery, when Sathan ſhall tempt vs, ſinne diſquiet vs, troubles oppreſſe vs, death affright vs; what is now the laſt refuge of a poore ſoule, but to flie vnto God by prayer. Now, alas, when our prayers ſhall become abominable, and turned into ſinne, who is then able to put to ſilence the voice of deſperation?

And on the contrary part, what can bee more comfortable then when troubles and miſeries ſhall come, ſickneſſe, and death it ſelfe ſhall approach, that we may haue free acceſſe vnto the throne of grace, there to powre out our ſoules into his boſome. The very thoughts hereof comforted *David* ouer all his ſorrowes, *I ſhall*

(saith he) *finde trouble and heauinesse, but I will call vpon the Name of the Lord, O Lord, I beseech thee deliuer my soule.*

4 And last of all, this may teach vs how to esteeme of godly and righteous men, howsoeuer the world esteemeth of such, doubtlesse they are in high esteeme with God, they are the Lords *Fauourites*, they are seldome or neuer denyed in their suites vnto God; they haue euer accesse into the presence chamber of the Almightie; they preuaile for themselues and others, being in grace and fauour. Surely howsoeuer the world doth iudge and esteeme of Gods people, there is not a wicked man liuing but fareth the better euery day, for their sake. They are they that, with *Moses* and *Aaron*, are euer and anon readie to stand in the gap to turne away the

the Lords wrathfull indignation againſt a Land and people. Thus much for the generall Inſtruction.

Lord remember me when thou commeſt, &c. *Text.*

The next thing we are to obſerue, is the Prayer it ſelfe, *Lord remember me*, &c.

Though *faith* which is the life of the ſoule be hidden in it ſelfe, yet it is perceiued by the fruites thereof. As we ſee the naturall life is a ſecret in nature, yet perceiued by the Symptomes of life, ſuch as are motion, breathing, &c. And as the ſappe in the root is ſecret, yet perceiued by the bloſſomes and fruite that the ſame ſends forth; Euen ſo is that ſpirituall life in the ſoule, made manifeſt by the bleſſed fruites and effects thereof,

thereof, such as are affiance in God, prayer, &c.

The faith of the Penitent, admirable in two respects.

Now the faith of this Penitent is admirable in two respects.

I

First, in respect of the things beleeued.

Secondly, in respect of the circumstances thereunto belonging, which makes the same so much the more admirable.

The things he professeth here to beleeue touching Christ, are

1 That he is a *Lord*.

2 That he is a *King*, howbeit that his kingdome be not of this world, but spirituall in the hearts of men.

2

Secondly, the circumstances thereto belonging, serue much to commend the excellency thereof.

I

In respect of the Petitioner.

First, in respect of the Petitioner, such a one that had not beene brought vp in the schoole of Christ, but rather in a den of theeues,

theeues, hauing none to instruct him, hauing not heard Christs heauenly doctrine, nor seene those glorious miracles that hee wrought, and yet notwithstanding to acknowledge him thus to be a *Lord*, and a *King*: this serues greatly for the commendations of his faith.

Secondly, in respect of the Petitioned, and that is Christ, now at this time so much abased, despised, forsaken, yea, of his owne Disciples themselues. Now there is no healing of the sicke, no giuing sight to the blinde, no raising vp of the dead. At this time I say to acknowledge Christs Deity, and to seeke at his hands for a kingdome, must needs shew his faith to be admirable.

2 In respect of the Petitioned.

(*Lord*)

The

Christ a Lord two wayes.

The first title that hee here assigneth vnto Christ is, he calleth him *Lord.*

Now Christ is a *Lord,*

1 In himselfe,

2 In his relation to vs.

1 In himself. Ioh. 1. 3. Heb. 1. 3.

First, in himselfe, and so is he *Lord ouer all, blessed for euer.* Both in respect that he giueth essence and being vnto all things, sustaining all things by his Almighty power.

Luke 2. 11. Acts 10. 36

As also for that he is the Soueraigne *Lord of all,* and therefore called *Lord of the Angels,* much more of all other inferiour creatures.

Yea, the title of Soueraigntie, to be called *Lord,* is so proper vnto Christ, as that many times in the Scriptures, he is called by no other name. As that of the Apostle Saint *Paul. God hath raised vp the Lord;* and, *no man can say that*

1 Cor. 6. 14. 1 Cor. 12. 3

Iesus

Iesus is the Lord, but by the holy Ghost: and againe, *Vnto vs there is but one God, which is the Father, in whom are all things, and one Lord Iesus Christ.* 1 Cor. 8. 6.

Yea, this is that title which Christ doth assume and take vnto himselfe, as a proper name, by the which he will be knowne of vs. *Ye call me Lord and Master, and ye say well, I am so.* Ioh. 13. 13.

Now this title of *Lord* doth most truely and properly belong vnto him, because he is *Lord* indeed, and that in foure respects, Christ Lord in himselfe, in foure respects.

First, by right of creation, in that he made vs of nothing, when we had no being. *For all things were made by him, and without him was made nothing that was made.* 1 Ioh. 1. 3. Col. 1. 15.

Secondly, by right of inheritance, *for he is made Heyre of all things.* 2 Heb. 1. 2.

Thirdly,

3 Thirdly, by right of dominion, or Lordſhip, in regard of that power, rule, and dominion, hee hath ouer all things, of whom we hold all things wee haue and inioy; bodies, ſoules, goods, and all, and that but in *Capite*, and onely *durante beneplacito*, ſo long as he ſhall pleaſe.

4. And laſtly, in regard hee hath no partners with him in his dominion. *Though there be differences of adminiſtrations, yet there is but one Lord*, and it is hee that is ſole Monarch, and onely Potentate ouer the whole earth, and is therefore called *King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.*

1 Cor. 12. 5

1 Tim. 6. 15

2 In his relation to vs: foure wayes. 1 Secondly, as he is *Lord* in himſelfe, ſo is hee alſo in his relation to vs, and that foure wayes.

Firſt, by right of redemption, for it is he that hath ranſomed vs out of the hands of Sathan, and

power

power of hell, to whom wee were once in bondage. Now hee redeemes vs with his bloud, and payes that matchlesse price for vs, and thereby makes vs his owne; *We were not redeemed,* (saith the Apostle) *with corruptible things, as Siluer and Gold, but with the precious bloud of Christ.* 1 Pet. 1. 18 19.

Secondly, in respect of that spirituall marriage that is betwixt Christ and euery faithfull soule. For the Lord hath coupled vs vnto himselfe in holy wedlocke: *I will marry thee vnto me for euer; yea, I will marry thee vnto mee in righteousnesse, in iudgement, and in mercy, and in compassion.* And againe, *As the Husband is the Wiues head, so Christ is the head of the Church.* 2. Hos. 2. 19. Eph. 5. 23.

Thirdly, in the right of conseruation, by whom we are kept and maintained. *Sustaining all things* 3. Heb. 1. 3.

things by his mighty power. For as he hath redeemed vs out of the power of Sathan, he leaues vs not without any further care, but ſtill watcheth ouer vs for good: for if the wings of his ſpeciall prouidence were not ſpred ouer vs, and mercy compaſſed vs about, wee had not liued to this preſent hour, but our bodies long ere this had beene in the graue, and our ſoules in hell.

4 And laſt of all, becauſe all the elect of God are a choſen generation giuen him of God the Father, ouer whom hee ſhould rule, and therefore called his *peculiar people*, caſt vpon him onely to bee cared for.

So then conſider we Chriſt as a Redeemer, as a Husband, as hee that hath vndertaken for vs, and his Church likewiſe as his peculiar people, caſt vpon him by good right,

right must Christ needs be *Lord*.

But how can Christ be such a *Lord*, seeing he is so often called in the Scriptures, by the name of a *Seruant? He tooke vpon him the forme of a Seruant.* *Obiect.* Phil.2.7.

Christ is to be considered as a Mediator, and so is he in a speciall manner, a Seruant vnto his Father, because he faithfully serued him therein, being first sent of God, and therein became obedient vnto his Father in all things. Yet this doth no whit derogate from Christs dignitie, who still remained a *Lord* in himselfe, and *Lord* ouer vs his redeemed ones. *Answ.* Esa.37.35.

The vses arising hence are these.

First, if Christ be such a *Lord* in himselfe, and such a *Lord* ouer vs, we are taught to esteeme of him accordingly, and to yeeld vp all holy obedience vnto him. Doth *Vse* 1.

not the Lord require it vpon this very ground: *If I be a Lord, where is my feare?* And againe, *Why call ye me Lord, and doe not the things I command you?* And because an hypocrite may yeeld Christ this homage in words, to cry *Lord, Lord*, we must by our deeds yeeld vp our selues as seruants to obey him in all righteousnesse.

Mal. 1.6. Luke 6.46 Mat. 7 21.

2 Secondly, wee must labour to be acquainted with the will of our Lord, for otherwise we can neuer performe any acceptable obedience vnto him. Our good meanings will not goe for payment with him; such seruice can neuer please him, for *without knowledge, the minde is not good.*

Pro. 19.2.

3. Thirdly, the consideration of this, that Christ is our *Lord*, should worke our hearts to contentation in all estates and conditions of life whatsoeuer, whether we

weale or woe, prosperity or aduersitie. It was a godly resolution of old *Eli*, when he heard of that strange iudgement the Lord would bring vpon his house: *It is the Lord, let him doe as it pleaseth him.* He kisseth the rod like a good natured childe, and submitteth himselfe to the Lords sharpest corrections without repining. And this was *Dauids* case when the Lords hand lay heauy vpon him: *I became dumbe, and opened not my mouth, because it was thy doing.* And so the Church in great affliction and distresse: *It is the Lords mercy that wee are not consumed, because his compassions faile not.* 1 Sam. 2. 18. Psal. 39. Lam. 3. 40. Iob 1. vlt.

And last of all, we are taught to depend vpon him, for food, rayment, and all things necessary, that is our *Lord*, and hath vndertaken for vs. Children can doe 4.

this, hauing earthly fathers, and seruants can doe this, that haue earthly Masters and Lords ouer them; Why then should not Gods people doe this with hope and boldnesse, especially seeing he hath commanded vs to cast all our care vpon him, being *God all-sufficient.*

Gen. 17. 1.

Text. (*Thy Kingdome*)

Secondly, as he acknowledgeth Christ to be a *Lord*, yea, the Soueraigne *Lord of all*, so doth he likewise acknowledge him to be a King, yet so as that his kingdome is not of this world, *Lord remember me when, &c.*

2 Christ is a King.

This regall and Kingly office of Christ, is clearely manifested throughout the whole Scripture.

Psal 2. 6.

I haue set my King vpon my holy mountaine.

Christ

Christ taketh this honour vnto himselfe, *All power* (saith he) *is giuen me in heauen and earth.* Mat.28.18 Esay 9 7.

And againe, he hath vpon his garment, and vpon his thigh, a name written, *The King of Kings, and Lord of Lords.* Thus the Euangelist Saint *Luke*, *Hee shall raigne ouer the house of Iacob for euer, and of his kingdome shall bee no end.* Reu.19.16 Luk. 1.33. Dan. 2.44. Dan.7.14. 1 Cor. 15. 24.

Againe, that this kingdome of Christ is not of this world, otherwise then in the hearts of men, but it is a spirituall and celestiall kingdome; so Christ, *My kingdome is not of this world*: though he were Heyre apparent vnto the Crowne, and kingdome of Israel, being the seed of *Dauid*, yet *hee withdrew himselfe when the people sought to make him King*, and refused to determine cases of Inheritances betwixt brethren. Ioh.18.36. Rom.13. Ioh. 6.15. Luke 12.13

The things peculiar vnto Christ and his kingdome.

Now there are many things peculiar vnto Christ, wherein hee excels all the Kings of the earth.

1 First, in regard of the excellency of his person, other Kings are the sonnes of mortall men, Christ is the Sonne of the euerliuing God.

2 Secondly, in respect of the extent of his Kingdome, hee is that vniuersall Monarch, *King of Kings*, from the ends of the earth. Reu. 19. 16 Psal. 2. 8. *Aske of mee, and I will giue thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the vtmost parts of the earth for thy possession.* Alexander neuer saw many parts of the world, much lesse subdued them; but Christ is King *ouer all*, yea, hee raigneth and ruleth ouer Angels, Acts 10. Col. 2. 9. principalities and powers.

3 Thirdly, in respect of those victorious conquests that are made by Christ, he hath the preheminence

heminence of all Princes, he hath conquered sinne, death, hell, Sathan, and hath spoyled Principalities and powers. Col. 2. 15.

And last of all, in regard of the perpetuitie of Christs Kingdome, *His Kingdome shall haue no end.* Other Kings and Kingdomes haue their periods, and determination, but thus is it not with this King and Kingdome, for hee is *The King eternall, immortall, inuisible, and onely wise God.* 4 1 Tim. 1. 17

Now the vse is,

First of all, seeing Christ is our King, we are taught with *Iob, to acquaint our selues with God,* and with the statute lawes of his kingdome, Subiects must not be ignorant of the Princes lawes. To plead ignorance, will not purchase immunitie from punishment, if men offend against the lawes of the kingdome. All Gods people must *Vse* 1.

be acquainted with Gods will reuealed in his Word. *Teaching them to obserue all things whatsoeuer I commande you. See that ye despise not him that speaketh, for if they escaped not which refused him that spake on earth, much more shall we not escape, if wee turne away from him that speaketh from heauen.*

Mat. 28. 20. Heb. 12. 25.

2 Secondly, seeing Christ is our King, and we are his Subiects, we we are taught to carry our selues accordingly; Christs Subiects must differ in manners from all other Nations and people in the world, they are a *Royall generation*, a peculiar people vnto the Lord, and therefore are to shew forth the power of him that hath thus called vs out of darkenesse, into the maruellous light. And herein to approue our selues for his Subiects and People, by our holy

holy conuerſation in the world. *He hath choſen vs, that we ſhould be holy and without blame before him in loue.* Eph. 1. 4.

Thirdly, we are to labour by all meanes poſſible for the *comming of Chriſts Kingdome*; that is, for the inlargement thereof in the world, in the hearts and conſciences of men. Chriſts kingdome of *power*, Chriſts kingdome of grace, and his kingdome of *glory*. 3. The meanes to inlarge Chriſts kingdome.

Now the meanes are either, Externall, or Internall.

The Externall meanes for the inlarging of Chriſts kingdome, are, 1 Externall.

1 The Word.

2 The Sacraments.

3 Diſcipline.

The Word is the Scepter of Chriſts kingdome.

The Sacraments are the Churches *magna charta*, confirming the coue-

Couenants betwixt Christ and his people.

And *Discipline* is the due execution of Christs lawes for the incouragement of the good, and reclaiming of the euill.

2 Internall: The *Internall* meanes for the enlarging of this kingdome of Christ is, the effectuall working of Gods Spirit, without which no outward meanes whatsoeuer can be effectuall. And therefore God is earnestly to be sought vnto by prayer, to second his owne ordinances by the effectuall working of his owne Spirit, that the same may be effectuall for the building vp of the elect, and the gathering together of the body of Christ. And this is that which all good Subiects must desire and labour for, euery particular man according to his place, Princes and Magistrates especially. Then Ministers

sters who are the Dispensers of Christs Lawes, yea and all people, for herein shall wee approue our selues true and loyall Subiects indeed to Christ our King.

And thus haue we seene how Christ is both *Lord* and *King*. And now for this poore Penitent thus to behold Christs excellencie and glory at this time when he was at the lowest ebbe of his humiliation, I say, to behold Christs Godhead when it was most vailed, in such a death to behold life, and in such ignominie and reproach, to behold such glory; this makes greatly for the commendations of his *faith*.

Had hee in times past beene conuersant with Christ, had hee heard his heauenly doctrine, or seene those glorious miracles which he wrought, as the disciples did, there might haply that seed be

be fallen into his heart, that how-
soeuer buried for a time, as it was
the case of *Peter*, yet at last might
bring forth this happie fruite. But
this being the first sight that he
got of Christ, for ought we know,
and that at such a time, when
Christ is most of all abased, and
when all his Disciples had forsa-
ken him. Surely this must needs
declare the almightie power of
God in him, and commend his
faith and *conuersion* to be admira-
ble indeed. But this will faith do,
the nature whereof is,

Doct: True faith raiseth vp a man aboue this life.

To raise a man aboue this life.
Not to liue by sense, or to iudge
of things according to the out-
ward appearance, but to be-
leeue Gods Word, and things
incredible, and in some sort *im-
possible*, against sence, and aboue
reason. Thus was it with this *Pe-
nitent Thiefe* at this time. What
great things beleeueth and con-

feſſeth hee here of Chriſt, againſt all ſence and reaſon, that he was *Lord* and *King* of heauen and earth, able to giue eternall life and ſaluation to whom it pleaſed him, when there was no outward appearance of any ſuch power in Chriſt, but rather indeed of the contrary. This ſhewes the wonderfull force of faith; yea hee beleeueth aboue hope, and contrary to hope, hauing no ground at all in naturall reaſon to perſuade him thereunto.

Faith (ſaith the Apoſtle) *is the euidence of things not ſeene, and the ground of things hoped for.* Where outward ſence and naturall reaſon takes place, there faith is not exercíſed. It is the excellencie of faith to beleeue where we ſee not, when we ſhall come *to walke* (as the Apoſtle ſaith) *by faith, and not by ſight.* Yea when outward ſence

Heb. 11.1.

2. Cor. 5.7.

ſence and naturall reaſon failes, then doth faith moſt of all beſtir it ſelfe. Fortifying it ſelfe daily in all the attributes of God, ſuch as are his wiſedome, power, truth, iuſtice, &c. We may ſee this in *Abraham* in the very act of ſacrificing his ſonne *Iſaac*, in whom the promiſe was made. He conſulted not with fleſh and bloud, what ſhould become of the ſame, if *Iſaac* ſhould faile. But his faith looked vp higher, euen vnto Gods power, faithfulneſſe, and truth, and ſtayeth himſelfe thereon.

Gen. 22. 1.

Wee haue a Catalogue of examples in this kinde, mentioned by the Author of that Epiſtle to the *Hebrewes*, who manifeſted the truth of their faith by beleeuing the promiſes in the middeſt of the extremeſt dangers.

Heb. 11.

Reaſ. And the reaſon is, Becauſe the faith

faith of euery true beleeuer resteth it selfe vpon two immoueable props, Gods *power*, and Gods *truth*.

Gods *power*, was the ground of that admirable faith that was found in *Abraham*, in sacrificing of *Isaac*, *He accounted that God was able to raise him vp, euen from the dead, from whence also he receiued him after.* And the consideration of Gods truth is excellent to the same end. He is a God of truth and cannot lie, he cannot denie himselfe: *Heauen and earth shall passe away, yet shall no one iot or tittle of his word passe away.*

Heb. 11.19

Mat. 5.18.

Seeing then the nature of faith is such, as that it raiseth vp the faithfull soule aboue this life, to beleeue contrary vnto hope, as we see in this *Penitent*, that albeit Christ at this time was in extreme ignominie and reproach, yet acknow-

Vse 1.

knowledgeth him to be *Lord* and *King*: this serues to shew then how many thousands in the world deceiue themselues, and are farre from true faith.

How many sorts of mē want true faith.

1 First, all such whose faith is not grounded vpon Gods word, but onely vpon sence; such truths as they are able to apprehend in their owne iudgements, they will be content to allow of; but such truths as they are not able by sence and reason to apprehend, they presently reiect: whereas true faith hath an eye principally to the word, and rests there, whilest sence and reason sees nothing.

2 Secondly, such as by reason of outward prosperitie, concludes they must needs bee highly in Gods fauour and loue, whereas indeed, *No man knoweth either loue or hatred of thos that is before him.* Whereas the childe of God

Eccl. 9. 2.

that

that hath faith indeed, rests vpon Gods bare word, though for the present he see no performance.

Thirdly, such who because the Lords iudgements are not presently executed, haue their hearts set vpon euill, and are ready to say with those cursed Atheists, *Where are he promises of his comming?* They neuer tremble before the Lord vntill his rod be vpon them. Whereas the godly man that hath faith indeed, hee knoweth that there is an vnchangeable certaintie in Gods threatnings, and seeing the sword comming hideth himselfe. 3

Secondly, let this serue to admonish vs all in the feare of God, to take heed how we consult with flesh and bloud in things appertaining vnto God, vnto eternall life and saluation. The *Impenitent Theefe* from the consideration of *Vse* 2.

Christs wonderfull abasement, and that common reproach that he now lay vnder, from all sorts concludeth that he could not be God. He is led as a beast onely by sence, Christ appearing now *without forme or beautie*. So depraued are our iudgements by nature, in things appertaining vnto Christs kingdome. But this *Penitent Theefe* is led by another principle, he beholds Christ not with fleshly eyes, but with the eyes of faith, and so, euen in his lowest degree of humiliation, beholds him as *Lord*, and *King*: heere is the strength and power of sauing faith indeed.

Isa. 53.

Text. *Lord remember me when thou commest*, &c.

This *Penitent* being now to leaue the world, and to go to giue vp

vp his last account vnto God, for all the things he had done in his bodie, whether they were good or euill: he commends his soule vnto God in prayer, and therein shewes an excellent fruite of his faith. 2. Cor. 5. 10.

And in praier preferreth Christ vnto him, vnder such names and titles as may strengthen his faith, and minister vnto him a comfortable expectation to be heard and answered in those things he prayeth for. Now the onely thing he desireth at this time is, that since he must now leaue the world, to go to a place of an euerlasting abode, where he must heare that hee neuer heard, and must euer heare; where he must see that he neuer saw, which hee must euer see; and feele that hee neuer felt, which hee must euer feele, that Christ whose power he acknow-

ledgeth to be all-sufficient, being *Lord* and *King* of heauen and earth, would now in mercy remember him. Note hence,

Doct. In prayer wee must see God allsufficient in those things wee aske of him.

That wee must so consider of God in prayer, as that wemay see him to bee *God all-sufficient* in those things we desire of him. It was mercy for his soule after death that was the thing this *Penitent* so much desired. And so that it might go well with it, hee neuer seeks at Christs hands any corporall or temporall deliuerance, as his fellow the *Impenitent Thiefe* doth. But this, O this is the thing that hee principally doth desire aboue all things in the world, that Christ would in mercy remember him when hee came into his kingdome. And to the end hee may haue hope in death, and that this his request may be gratiously heard and answered

swered by Christ, hee beholdeth Christ at this time to be *God all-sufficient*, euery-way able to grant his desire, he seeth and acknowledgeth him to haue all the power in heauen and earth, able to giue saluation at last. And thus whatsoeuer our requests are that wee put vp vnto God, it is an excellent thing, so to conceiue of God, and such his glorious attributes, as his power, wisedome, truth, loue, mercy, iustice, &c. as that we may still behold him as *God all-sufficient* in those things wee seeke of him. Gen. 17.1.

An excellent example whereof we haue in the seruant of *Abraham*, who being sent by his Master to prouide a wife for his sonne *Isaac*, goeth first vnto God in prayer, to prosper him therein. And in prayer presenteth God vnto him according to his coue- Gen 34.12

nant and promise hee had made with his Master *Abraham*, *O Iehouah thou God of my Master Abraham, I pray thee send me good speede this day, and shew kindenesse vnto my master Abraham.* This we may obserue likewise to haue beene in the Apostle *Paul*, in diuers and sundry prayers of his that he made vnto God, as when he exhorted the Romans to patience and consolation. Hee prayes that the same gifts and graces may be bestowed vpon them, and in prayer sets God before his eyes, as *God al-sufficient*, in those particular things: *Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like minded one towards another.* Againe, the same Apostle in the same Chapter, cals him the *God of hope*, *The God of hope fill you with all ioy, &c.*

Rom. 15. 4. 5.

Vers. 13.

We may see this in the Prophet *Dauid*

David, who when he was to pray against the enemies of the Church, beholdeth God to bee all sufficient, to take vengeance vpon them, *O Lord God to whom vengeance belongeth, thou God to whom vengeance belongeth, shew thy selfe.* Psal. 94. 1.

Thus the Church when they heard that *Peter* was cast into prison, goe presently vnto God in prayer, and therein strengthen themselues in the consideration of Gods power. This being an act wherein the same might be made manifest in *Peters* deliuery; *Lord, thou art a God, who hast made heauen and earth, the Sea and all that in them is, &c.*

So the Apostle Saint *Paul* exhorting the Corinthians to mutuall peace, *liue in peace* (saith he) *and the God of peace and loue bee with you.* We may see this in all the

the Apostles at such times as they made choyce of one in the rome and place of *Iudas*. They pray that God would direct them therein. Acts 1.24. *Thou God which knowest the hearts of all men, shew which of these two thou hast chosen.* The reasons are,

Reas. 1. First, this is to pray in iudgement, which is required of euery one that would make an effectuall prayer vnto God. Pro. 15.8. *The sacrifice of the wicked are abhomination vnto the Lord, but the prayer of the righteous is his delight.* And this is indeed to glorifie God in his attributes, who delighteth in his seruants, that can make a right vse of them.

2 Secondly, this is an excellent prop for the faith of Gods people to leane vpon. When men seeke of those that are euery way furnished to supply their wants, it is no small

small incouragement vnto them to bee earneſt in their ſuits vnto them. Now all fulneſſe and ſufficiency is in God. What thing doe we ſtand in need of, wherein there is not an al-ſufficiency in him? How many diſtinct acts of his wiſedome, power, goodneſſe, mercy, iuſtice, &c. hath he left vs examples of in his Word, and all to ſupport our weake faith when we pray vnto him.

Thirdly, the due conſideration hereof, makes a beleeuer more earneſt and affectionate in prayer, which is a thing wherein the Lord takes much delight. This put life in the ſute of the poore Cananite, who will not bee ſayd nay at Chriſts hands, albeit ſhee had neuer ſo many diſcouragements by Chriſt himſelfe at the firſt, and afterwards by his Diſciples. Shee ſaw Chriſts al-ſufficiency, 3. Mat. 15.

ency, that hee was able to helpe. Nothing doth better ſtabliſh and ſettle the heart of the childe of God, againſt doubtings and feares, and worke feruency, integrity, and confidence, all which are moſt requiſite in prayer, then the due conſideration of this, that God is all in all, in the very thing it ſelfe we ſeeke vnto him for.

Vſe 1. This ſerues firſt of all to condemne that horrible practice of the Church of Rome, who nozell vp the people in all manner of ignorance; how is it poſſible that ſuch a one ſhould make an effectuall prayer vnto God? Surely, where men are ignorant of the nature of God, and of his principall attributes, ſuch as are his power, wiſedome, truth, iuſtice, mercy, &c. which thoſe muſt needs bee, that are acquainted with his Word, ſuch can neuer make an effectuall

effectuall prayer vnto God.

Secondly, this may also serue for our instruction, that as wee desire to pray effectually: as wee are to take notice of our owne misery and present necessity, so withall, to behold in God his all-sufficiency, and such speciall attributes of his, we stand most of all in need of. Art thou in misery and distresse, conceiue of God in thy prayers, as a mercifull God, and such a one that is full of compassion, able and willing to helpe: Thus doth this Penitent here, yea, behold him as *a God of mercy, and Father of all consolation and comfort*. Standest thou in need of his power to helpe thee? Present him vnto thy minde, euen at the first entrance into thy prayers, as a powerfull God. And so likewise for his wisedome, truth, iustice, &c. We euer seeke those things most

2

most constantly and comfortably, when we know them to bee had at his hands, from whom we seek them. This being carefully obserued of vs, we shall finde it a strong prop vnto our faith, and an excellent meanes to kindle affection in vs, and so a thing most vsefull and necessary in prayer.

Text. *Lord remember me when thou commest into thy kingdome.*

2 His desire it selfe.

These two Theeues make two different requests vnto Christ; the one for a corporall and temporall deliuerance, *If thou bee Christ, saue thy selfe and vs.* The request of the other is, that his soule might bee saued in the day of the Lord, *Lord remember mee, &c.* according to the inward principle of the heart, so goes the desire. They that are carnall, are carnally

carnally minded, but the ſpirituall man is ſpiritually minded, and his deſires are principally after ſpirituall things.

And herein will teach vs,

That the ſaluation of a mans ſoule is the thing that euery man, next vnto the glory of GOD, ought principally to deſire. This Penitent had taken care of Gods glory before, by iuſtifying Chriſts innocency, and now in the next place, he looketh after the ſaluation of his ſoule, that it might goe well with that in death: yea, by how much the more excellent the ſoule is aboue the body, by ſo much the more carefull ought a man to be of the ſaluation of the one aboue the other. Our greateſt care muſt be, that it may goe well with our ſoules at death.

Doct. The ſaluation of the ſoul is principally to be deſired.

We may ſuppoſe this penitent Thiefe, ſpeaking thus at this time.

O Lord, inasmuch as my life hath beene wretched, it is iust with thee that I should now at last suffer this shamefull & cursed death. It is not life that I desire, but am willing to imbrace the sentence of death, and the rather, for that I see it is thy good pleasure it should be so. This is the onely thing I now desire, that when this life shal haue an end, & I shal come to appeare before thee in thy kingdome, that thou wouldest be pleased in mercy then to remember me.

Now if all Gods children be led by one and the same spirit, and so are alike disposed in respect of spirituall good things; it must necessarily follow that this longing desire after life and saluation, that was in this Penitent, is wrought in some measure in the hearts of those that are vnder the same hope,

hope, and they are able in the witnesse of a good conscience, to say as hee did here, *Lord remember me, &c.*

This affection was in the Prophet *Dauid*, when hee saith, *O Lord, I haue longed for thy saluation.* And indeed what other thing then the soules future happinesse, can the Scriptures intend in these and the like places, exhorting vs to *seeke for wisedome and knowledge, as for siluer.* Of searching for it as for *treasures*: of *striuing to enter in at the straight gate*, of *labouring for that meate which shall indure to euerlasting life*, of *running to obtaine*, and the like, what is meant I say in all these, but the saluation of the soule aboue all other things? This was old *Simeons* desire, *Lord now lettest thou thy seruant depart in peace, &c.*

Pro. 2 4.

Luk. 13. 24
Ioh. 6. 27.

Luke 2.

This

This affection we finde to haue beene in those Iewes conuerted at *Peters* Sermon, *Men and Brethren,* (say they) *What shall wee doe to be saued?* being conuinced in their iudgements of that th ir hainous sinne of crucifying t e Lord of life, they came trembling vnto the Apostles, fearing what would become of their soules.

Act. 2.37.

We may see this in that poore perplexed Iaylor, who came trembling in to *Paul* and *Sylas,* with his, *Sirs what shall I doe to be saued?* This truth is further cleared vnto vs by Christs prayer hee hath left vnto vs, where wee are taught to pray first of all, *Thy kingdome come,* before, *Giue vs this day, our daily bread.* And this is obserued to haue beene the commendations of that wise M rchant, that sold all that he had, to buy the *Pearle,* as knowing that it

Act 16.30.

Mat.6.

Mat.13.44

it would make him rich vnto ſaluation. I might giue diuers other inſtances and examples, but theſe are ſufficient, to ſhew what is the diſpoſition and affection of all Gods people. Theirs are hungrie ſoules, theirs are longing hearts; and the maine thing they ſo much deſire is, the ſaluation of their ſoules.

Whereas on the contrary part, carnall men, like the *Impenitent Thiefe*, preferre a temporall deliuerance before an eternall; Like thoſe Iewes who preferred their owne priuate gaine, before the building of the Temple. Like *Eſau* a meſſe of pottage, before the Birth-right. Like thoſe *Gadarens*, their hogges before Chriſt: And like that young man in the Goſpell, who went away ſorrowfull, chuſing rather to hazard his ſoule then to part with his wealth.

Hag. 1.2.

Heb. 12.16

Mat. 8.24.

Mat. 19.

Now the grounds are these.

Reas. 1. Firſt, the godly do principally deſire the ſaluation of their ſoules in regard their iudgements are rightly informed, to ſet a due price vpon the ſame. The Apoſtle Saint *Peter* ſpeaking of the inheritance of eternall life, calleth it, 1. Pet. 1. 4. *Immortall, vndefiled, and that which withereth not, reſerued in heauen for vs.* Wherein he ſecretly compareth the things of this world, with thoſe that are reſerued for the faithfull after this life: and ſheweth that all things here are corruptible, but the things of the life to come are incorruptible. And hence it comes to paſſe, that wiſdoms children make choice of heauen & heauenly things, about all tranſitorie things whatſoeuer.

2 Secondly, our Sauiour ſheweth the neceſſitie hereof, ſaying, Mat. 16. 26 *What ſhall it profit a man to winne*

the

the whole world, and to lose his owne soule? Were it not better for that man that he had neuer beene borne? what then can deserue the chiefest of a mans care, if not this?

Thirdly, this is it that distinguisheth betwixt Gods people and the men of this world, worldly men desire principally worldly things, *Corne, and wine, and oyle:* Whereas the godly that haue another principle within to direct them, desire especially Gods countenance and grace with *Dauid, But Lord grant me thy countenance,* &c. 3 Psal. 4. 6.

This serues first of all to reproue the great and generall neglect of that, for the which there ought to be so great a care. Alas, the behauiour of the greatest part of the world, concerning their soules and the eternall welfare of the same after this life, sauoureth *Vse 1.*

of an opinion, that it is either a thing most easie, or a thing indifferent to be saued. For the things of this life wee see the excessiue care, the wonderfull labour and paines that men take early and late, by Sea and by Land, putting their bodies many times to that labour they would not willingly put their beast vnto, and all for fleeting and transitorie things, that will not, that cannot profit in the euill day; which caused the Prophet to complaine thus: Isa. 55.2. *Wherefore do ye lay out your labour, and not for bread; and your strength, and not being satisfied?* Who can sufficiently bewaile this madnes, and cry downe this follie? The cares of this life, like Gen.41.20 *Pharaohs leane kine*, hath deuoured the care of heauen. Such men can neuer lift vp their mindes vnto heauen, that account the earth and

and earthly things their chiefeſt Treaſure; giue them enough of this world, and let him that will take the world to come. None are farther out of the way, nor deſtitute of true wiſedome, then thoſe men are. What are they better then fooles, that preferre a peece of rotten wood that ſhineth in the night, before the fineſt gold of *Ophyr*? Oh let vs take heed, leſt while wee condemne this as madneſſe and folly in other men, we proue not our ſelues the greateſt fooles.

Secondly, this may ſerue to admoniſh euery one in the feare of God, that with this godly *Penitent* wee make ſure worke for a better life. There is nothing concerneth a Chriſtian more then this, to get good aſſurance vnto his owne ſoule, that he ſhall bee ſaued at laſt. 2

Wee dwell here in houſes of clay, and our eyes on euery ſide of vs do behold the vncertaintie of all earthly things. Why then ſhould our thoughts be ſo taken vp, for theſe fraile bodies of ours, which are but ſlaues to death, ſo as in the meane time we neglect our pretious ſoules, which haue an euerlaſting being? why ſhould we exalt the body ſo high, that muſt lye ſo low, and moulder to duſt and aſhes, die and rot in the graue, and make no reckoning of our ſoules that liue for euer, wherein we may be truly bleſſed indeed?

O did wee know the conſequence of this one thing, and how much it concerneth vs, to ſeeke the eternall welfare of our ſoules, as Chriſt ſaid to the Samaritanith woman, *If thou knewest the gift of God:* we would come vnto the Miniſters

Ioh. 4. 10.

Ministers of God with that question of the trembling *Iewes*, and perplexed *Iaylor*, *Sirs, what must we do to be saued?* What comfort can a man take in any thing, that wants comfort in this? This is that one thing that is so necessary, this is that good part that shall not be taken from vs. Act. 16. 30

Obiect. But it will bee said, Wherefore take you so much paines to perswade to bee saued? who is there so vile, sinfull, or wicked, that would not be saued? Did not *Balaam* desire to die the death of the righteous? And doth not our Saviour tell vs of many that shall say, *Lord, Lord, open vnto vs?* Num. 23. 10. Mat. 7. 21.

Resp. Answer, it is most true: none so desperately wretched and sinfull, but would willingly go to heauen, escape Gods wrath, and be saued at last. But these light wishes and desires may be in the

wicked, as well as in the godly, in those that shall perish euerlastingly, as well as in those that shall be saued at last. And therefore it will bee requisite to obserue, the difference betwixt the *wishes* of the wicked, and the *desires* of the godly, in this weightie point of saluation.

The difference betwixt the godly and the wicked in their desiring saluation.

First, this proceeds not from the like ground in these two sorts of men. In all Gods children that shall be saued in the end, this desire of theirs springs from a true sence and feeling of their own wretchednes and misery through sinne, that he is the child of wrath, and firebrand of hell by nature, lies vnder Gods wrath, and is in danger of eternall destruction. The thoughts of this his present miserie, and fearefull condition by nature, sets him on worke to seeke deliuery. And in reason it must be so,

so, for vnto a condemned person, that lookes euery houre to bee executed, the Princes pardon must needs bee most acceptable, yea he would preferre that aboue all the world besides: So is it with a poore sinner, once throughly conuicted in his conscience for sinne, he can prize the fauour of God in Iesus Christ in the pardon of the same, more then all the world besides. Whereas the *Person that is full despiseth the honey combe.* And this is the estate of naturall men, they are not sensible of their owne spirituall miserie by reason of sinne, but are *Frozen vpon the dregs*, blesse themselues in their owne hearts, and know not that they are miserable, and poore, and blinde, and naked. And hence is it, that the desires of such men are cold and sleight in comparison of the other that are sensible

Pro. 27. 7.

Zeph. 1. 12. Deut. 29. 19 Reu. 3. 17.

sible of their misery by reason of sinne.

2 Secondly, the desire of Gods people of life and saluation, as it proceeds from a good ground, and therefore earnest; So it is euer ioyned with the vse of the meanes that God hath appointed for the attaining of eternall saluation, such as are the Ministery of the Word, the reuerend vse of the Sacrament, prayer, &c.

Whereas of the wicked, that of *Salomon* is most true, *The slugard lusteth, but his soule hath naught.* And againe, *The desire of the slothfull slayeth him, for his hands refuse to worke.* Pro. 13. 4.

3 Thirdly, howsoeuer a wicked man may desire heauen, eternall life and saluation, yet there is euer something that he preferreth before this. The young man in the Gospell that came to Christ, saying,

in[s], *Good Maſter, what ſhall I do to inherite eternall life?* ſhewed that hee wiſhed well to heauen, and the ſaluation of his ſoule: But being required by Chriſt to ſell all that hee had, and to giue to the poore, and to follow Chriſt, the Text ſaith, *He went away ſorrowfull.* Which ſhewed plainly, that hee loued his wealth better. Whereas the deſire of the godly is ſuch, as that they preferre eternall life, and the ſaluation of their ſoules, aboue all things in the world beſides. So *Dauid*, *Many ſay, who ſhall ſhew vs any good? But Lord grant vnto thy countenance, thy fauour, and grace.* Where *Dauid* oppoſeth his deſire againſt the deſire of worldlings; and ſheweth that howſoeuer worldly men deſire chiefely worldly things, hee for his part did chiefly deſire Gods counte-

Mat. 19.

nance,

nance, fauour and grace in the pardon of his sinnes, aboue all the world besides. And indeed vnto such doth the promise of eternall life belong and appertaine;

Ier.29.13. for so saith the Lord, *Ye shall seeke me, and finde me, because ye shall seeke me with your whole heart.*

4 Fourthly, howsoeuer the wicked and the godly desire eternall life alike, the childe of God onely is wise to lay hold vpon the opportunity whilest grace is offered,

Mat.6.33. seeking that in the first place, aboue all earthly and transitory things; whereas it is the propertie of wicked and vngodly men, to put it off, vntill the day of grace be past, euen till *the Master of the*

Luk.13.25 *house be risen vp, and hath shut to the dore.*

5. Fiftly, there is in the godly, and those that shall bee saued in the end, a constant seeking of God, of eternall

eternall life and ſaluation, not by moods and fits, but throughout the whole courſe of their liues. All their thoughts, words, and actions, ſauor of grace within, and tend vnto heauen, and the furtherance of their eternall happineſſe. Whereas with the wicked, it is not ſo with them, for if they deſire eternall life and ſaluation, it is no conſtant deſire, but by fits, either when the Word, or ſome affliction or other hath kindled ſuch a good motion for the preſent within them, but by and by, *like the morning dew it goeth away.* Hoſ.6.4.

6 And laſt of all, there is yet this difference betwixt the godly and the wicked in their deſires. A wicked man deſires mercy, but not grace, the pardon of ſinne, but not the ſpirit of corroboration and ſtrength againſt ſinne. He rather deſireth

desireth freedome from misery, the effect of sinne, then from sinne it selfe, the cause of misery: whereas the childe of God is as earnest with God for strength against his corruptions for the time to come, as the pardon of his sinne past: *David* is as earnest with God to *stablish him with his free spirit*, as to *wash him from his sinne*.

Psal. 51. 12.

Well then to conclude this poynt, would we haue any comfort in our owne soules, that we are amongst the number of those that hunger and thirst aright after eternall life and saluation, that our desires proue not to bee like the vaine wishes of the wicked, that shall not profit them in the end. O let vs then try our selues, and examine our owne hearts by the rule of this doctrine. Are we truly sensible of our owne wretchednesse and misery, by reason of sinne

haue

haue we vſed all holy helpes and meanes, whereby wee may come to the comfortable aſſurance ther-of vnto our owne ſoules? Haue we learned to prize eternall life and ſaluation aboue all the world beſides? haue we made vſe of all opportunites that God hath offered vnto vs for the getting of grace into our ſoules? hath this deſire of ours beene conſtant, and not by fits onely? and haue we as earneſtly ſought at Gods hand, ſtrength gainſt our corruptions, as the pardon of our ſinnes paſt? Theſe things indeed may miniſter vnto vs a comfortable aſſurance that our deſire of eternall life and ſaluation hath beene true, hath beene vnfained, ſuch as ſhall not miſſe of ſaluation in the end.

Whereas if on the contrary part, we neuer yet truely ſaw our miſery, by reaſon of ſinne, haue

euer

cuer sleighted Gods ordinan
preferred the world, our pr
and pleasures, before the cue
sting saluation of our soules, h
made no account of, the sea
and opportunity of grace offer
haue neither constantly desir
nor for future times sou
strength of God, against our c
ruptions, know wee that our
sires were neuer true and vnfain
but such as may be in wicked m
that shall misse of saluation in
end.

3 The time when,

When thou commest into thy kingdome.

As this Penitent Theefe at t
time acknowledgeth Christs D
ty, that hee was *Lord* and *King*,
and desireth as we haue heard be-
fore, principally, mercy for his
soule, that it might goe well with

it in death or after death. So now he comes to the time wherein especially he desired to bee remembred of Christ: *n.* when Christ should come into his kingdome.

Ld. O Lord now is the time of thy humiliation, wherein thou art pleased to vndergoe the punishment for the sinnes of all the elect, and to beare the burthen of thy Fathers wrath, and all to free thine from the wrath to come. I know this price will be payd, and this misery thou now suffereſt for sinne, will be ouer; and thou thy selfe againe restored into thy glorious kingdome, there to liue and raigne for euer. I beseech thee now heare mee against that time, and remember mee in mercy, when thou commeſt thither.

Doct. 1. The happineſſe of a Christian not to be looked for here, but hereafter.

Note we hence,

That the happineſſe of a Christian is not to be looked for here,

is not to be expected here, but in heauen. This made the Apostle *Paul* to say, *I forgat that which was behinde, and reaching forth vnto those things which are before, I presse toward the marke for the price of the high calling of God in Christ Iesus*, as knowing that the happy recompence of reward was not to bee looked for here, but hereafter. And the reason is,

Phil. 3.3. 13. 14.

Reas. 1. First, *we know but in part*, and therefore can beleeue but in part, can be sanctified but in part, and so cannot be capable of the perfection of our happinesse, till all our imperfections be done away, and our sanctification shall bee perfected.

1 Cor. 13.9

2 Secondly, this is the time in this life of a Christians warfare, where wee are to combate with sinne, Sathan, and the world. Now as it was said, *Let not him that putteth*

putteth on his Armour reioyce, but him that putteth it off: for this battell endeth not, vntill death come; when then we shal be out of the Gun-shot of Sathans temptations, and set free from all the enemies of our peace.

Besides, the Lord will haue the graces in the hearts of his seruants first exercised and made manifest, to the praise of his owne Name, and that in this life, before he crowne them with glory hereafter. 3

Seeing then that the happinesse of a Christian is not to be looked for here, but hereafter in the kingdome of heauen; This may teach vs in the first place, *to vse the world, as if we vsed it not,* and not to pitch our Tabernacle here, but rather to resolue that heauen is our portion and our inheritance, and therefore as *Strangers* and *Pil-* *Vse* 1. Heb. 11. 13

but hereafter. The fruit of repentance, of righteousnesse, and of holinesse, is not to bee looked for here, but hereafter. The Christian hath not his happinesse in present possession, but in reuersion. In hope and expectation are they kept here, liuing by faith: as the Heyre being not of ripe yeares, is not possest of the inheritance, but after death they come then to be possest of that glorious inheritance layd vp for the Saints. This doth this Penitent Theefe acknowledge here in this his request to Christ, as if he should say; O Lord this is not life for a time which can not be long, that I so much stand vpon, since death I haue deserued, I am willing to dye: but it is this I especially desire aboue all the world besides, that when this life shall haue an end, I may haue a resting place in thy kingdome. If in this

life onely wee haue hope in Christ, wee are of all men most miserable. 1 Cor. 15. 19.

And this the holy Ghost obserueth as an admirable fruit of the admirable faith of the Primitiue Fathers, who albeit *they receiued not the promises, but saw them a farre off, were perswaded of them, and imbraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and Pilgrims on earth, declaring plainely that they seeke a Country. Now we are the Sonnes of God,* (saith the Apostle) *But it doth not appeare what we shall be.* It is true, the Lord giues vs now *the first fruits of the Spirit, the earnest of our inheritance,* which is peace with God, and peace in our owne consciences, and ioy in the holy Ghost, to comfort the hearts of his seruants, and to cheare them vp in their pilgrimage. But the full fruition of their happinesse

Heb. 11. 13 14.

1 Ioh. 3. 2.

is not to be expected here, but in heauen. This made the Apostle

Phil. 3.3. 13.14. *Paul* to say, *I forgat that which was behinde, and reaching forth vnto those things which are before, I presse toward the marke for the price of the high calling of God in Christ Iesus*, as knowing that the happy recompence of reward was not to bee looked for here, but hereafter. And the reason is,

Reas. 1. First, *we know but in part*, and therefore can beleeue but in part, can be sanctified but in part, and so cannot be capable of the perfection of our happinesse, till all

1 Cor. 13.9 imperfections be done away, and our sanctification shall bee perfected.

2 Secondly, this is the time in this life of a Christians warfare, where wee are to combate with sinne, Sathan, and the world. Now as it was said, *Let not him that put-*

put-

put eth on his Armour reioyce, but him that put eth it off: for this battell endeth not, vntill death come, when then we shal be out of the Gun-shot of Sathans temptations, and set free from all the enemies of our peace.

Besides, the Lord will haue the graces in the hearts of his seruants first exercised and made manifest, to the praise of his owne Name, and that in this life, before he crowne them with glory hereafter. 3

Seeing then that the happinesse of a Christian is not to be looked for here, but hereafter in the kingdome of heauen; This may teach vs in the first place, *to vse the world, as if we vsed it not,* and not to pitch our Tabernacle here, but rather to resolue that heauen is our portion and our inheritance, and therefore as *Strangers* and *Pil-* *Vse 1.* Heb. 11. 13

Pilgrims, we should seek and pro-
uide for an abiding City.

2 Secondly, seeing our chiefe
happinesse and comfort is not to
be looked for here, nor in any su-
lunary thing vnder the Sunne, but
reserued for vs in Gods king-
dome; This should teach vs to
lift vp our hearts thither, and to
Col. 3. 2. *set our affections on heauenly
things*, and not on things below;
nothing can more dishonour a
Christian, then this, to make the
world his chiefest study and care,
whereas the Lord hath reserued
vs for a more durable and lasting
inheritance.

Text. *When thou commest into thy
kingdome.*

This Penitent Thiefe, although
truely humbled for his sinnes, and
obtayning mercy at Christs hands

in the pardon of them, as we shall see hereafter, yet is not freed from his temporall punishment, but suffereth with Christ. And herein will each vs,

That release from temporall afflictions doth not alwayes follow true repentance; but many are punished temporally, that are not condemned eternally. Wee may see this in that manner of the Lords dealing with *Adam* and *Eue* after they had sinned, God made with them a couenant, that *The seed of the woman should braise the serpents head*: which was a cleare promise and prophecie of Christ, by whom he was againe to bee restored into fauour. Yet notwithstanding, *Cursed bee the earth for thy sake*. And, *in sorrow shalt thou bring forth*, &c. This we may see in *Moses*, an excellent seruant of God, and so often stiled

Doct. 2. Releale from temporall afflictions doth not alwayes follow true repentãce.

Gen. 3. 15.

Deu 34. 5. 10.

led in Scripture, a man highly in Gods fauour, to whom God spake *face* to *face*, a *Ruler*, and *Sauiour* vnto his people Israel. Yet for his sinne the Lord would not suffer him to go into the land of *Canaan*. I do not doubt of the saluation of *Miriam*, the sister of *Moses*, that repined against *Moses*, because she was no Prophetesse, or at least in that authoritie as *Moses* himselfe was: yet God stroke her with the Leprosie. Though the Lord pardoned the sinne of *Dauid* vpon his true repentance, yet the sword is sent against his house, and his owne wiues are defiled. We may see this in the *Israelites*, in their iourneying towards the Land of *Canaan*, for whose sinne of murmuring against *Moses* and *Aaron*, the Lord brought heauie iudgements vpon them, vntill they were almost

2. Sam. 12. 10. 11.

Psal. 90.

waste

waſted and conſumed. And thus dealt the Lord with the Church of *Corinth*, for their want of their godly preparation in comming to the Lords Table, the Apoſtle tells them, *For this cauſe ſome are ſicke, and ſome are weake, and ſome are fallen aſleepe.* 1 Cor. 11. 30.

And it muſt needs be thus.

Firſt, the Lord though he do pardon the ſinnes of his children, doth oftentimes chaſtice them afterwards for the ſame; that hereby he may preuent the like ſinnes in time to come, and by the bitterneſſe of affliction may moue them to hate thoſe ſinnes, which otherwiſe vnto their corrupt nature would haue beene ſweet and pleaſant. And this, no doubt, was one reaſon wherefore the Lord layed his corrections ſo ſharply vpon *Dauid*, *Hezekiah*, *Manaſſes*, &c. that they might for future times *Reaſ.* 1.

times keepe the better watch ouer their owne hearts, and ouer their owne wayes, since sinne brings with it more bitternesse at last, then sweetnesse at first: and hee in preuents more heauie iudgements, which otherwise they would draw vpon themselues.

2 Secondly, as in respect of the godly themselues when they sin against God, God will visit their iniquities with the rod, and their sinnes with scourges; so also in respect of others, the Lord will make them exemplarie vnto others, to terrifie them from sinning against him. How many in the world haue receiued incouragement to commit sinne by *Dauids* example, *Noah*, *Peter*, &c. and yet the Lord did sharply and seuerely correct them. How much more would they bee incouraged by their examples, if the Lord had

any

any whit spared them therein.

The consideration whereof, *Vse* 1.
should make vs carefull by all meanes possible to auoid sinne, that brings with it such miserie here, if not for feare of eternall torments, which I confesse all the godly are freed from through the Lord Iesus Christ, yet at least for feare of temporall afflictions and chastisements for sinne, which the Lord many times doth bring vpon his seruants in this life sinning against him, which haue in them more bitternesse at last then pleasure at first.

Secondly, this may teach vs to 2
take heed how we censure others when Gods hand is vpon them; for so many Gods Church, and the deerest of his seruants, seeme manie times to bee most miserable. Who euer had such a load of sorrowes and afflictions layed

vpon

vpon them, as Christ himselfe had? Doth not *Hezekiah* com-
Esay 53. plaine that the Lord *bruſed his bones like a Lion?* And *Iob* likewiſe that the Lord ſet him as a marke to ſhoot at, and that the venome of the arrowes of the Almighty had drunke vp his ſpirits?

And ſo likewiſe for the Church of God, how many *pathetical* complaints doth it put vp in times of miſerie, as in the whole booke of the Lamentation, and elſewhere, of whom it is ſaid, *Thou*
Pſal. 80. 5. *feedeſt them with the bread of teares, and giueſt them teares to drinke in great meaſure.* And againe, in what a miſerable condition was the Church in, when the Prophet complaineth of it
Pſal. 79. 2. thus: *The dead bodies of thy ſeruants haue they giuen to bee meat vnto the fowls of the heauen: and the fleſh of thy Saints vnto the*

beaſts

beasts of the earth. Their bloud haue they shed like water, &c. and yet notwithstanding precious in Gods account.

Hitherto of the Penitent his requeſt vnto Christ. Christs anſwer followeth.

VERSE

VERSE 43.

Text. *And Iesus said vnto him, Verily I say vnto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.*

HItherto of the *Penitents* Petition. Now followeth Christs answer, *Verily I say vnto thee*, &c.

Wherein are obseruable,

1. Christs asseueration, (*Verily.*)
2. Person to whom, (*Thou.*)
3. Promise it selfe, (*Shalt bee with me.*)
4. Place (*Paradise.*)
5. Time, (*This day.*)

And Iesus said vnto him, Verily I say vnto thee, &c.

The word Englished here, *Verily*,

rily, in the originall is, *Amen*, and is ſeldome or neuer tranſlated either in the Greeke, Latine, Engliſh, or any other language. It is vſed often both in the old and new Teſtament: And the vſe thereof is twofold.

Firſt, it is vſed for an earneſt wiſh and deſire of the heart: and thus when *Dauid* had appointed *Solomon* to be Ruler ouer Iſrael, *Benaiah* the ſonne of *Iehoida* anſwered *Dauid*, ſaying, *Amen:* therein teſtifying his vnfained deſire that it ſhould bee ſo. And thus in thoſe ſolemne curſings which the *Leuites* muſt pronounce with a loud voice in the hearing of the people, The people to ſignifie that their aſſent thereunto, to euery particular thereof muſt ſay, Amen. And thus it is vſed in our Church at the ſhuting vpof our prayers, wherein wee teſtifie

1. King. 1. 36.

testifie our desire to be heard and answered in those things we pray for.

Secondly, the same is vsed againe for an earnest affirmation and asseueration, as in that speech of our Sauiour vnto *Nichodemus*, wherein the word is twice together repeated, *Amen, Amen, Dico tibi, &c. Verily, verily, I say vnto thee.* And is there in that place as also in this, in the nature of an *oath*, wherein our Sauiour will assure *Nichodemus*, and also this *Penitent* here, of the vndoubted certaintie of that hee spake, and promised, binding his promise here for the further confirmation of his faith, with a kinde of *oath*, *Verily I say vnto thee.*

Ioh.3.11.

Doct. 1. It is a wonderfulhard thing truly to beleeue.

The Doctrine that from hence may be concluded for our Instruction, is; How difficult a matter it is truly to beleeue in Christ.

Christ

Christ promising this *Penitent* forgiuenesse of sinnes, the saluation of his soule, and that that very day he should be with him in Paradise. Hee is faine for the further confirmation of his faith, to vse this asseueration, *Verily*, and all to perswade him of the truth of his promise. To beleeue aright in Christ, is not a worke of Nature, nor a thing that a naturall man in himselfe is disposed to, but it is a supernaturall worke of Gods Spirit. *To you it is giuen to beleeue*, saith *Paul*, yea it is a worke of Gods Almighty power: *That ye may know the greatnesse of his power to vs ward who beleeue, according to the working of his mightie power.* This made the Prophet *Isaiah* to complaine, and to say, *Lord who hath beleeued our report, and to whom hath the arme of the Lord beene reuealed?*

Phil. 1.

Ephe. 1. 19

Esay 53. 1.

Gen. 6. The old world would not beleeue *Noahs* preaching. Neither was
Gen. 18. *Lot* regarded of his *sonnes* and *Sodomites*, but hee seemed vnto them as if he had *mocked*. Wee may see this in *Gideon*, he was a man sent of God to be a deliuerer of the people of Israel, the Lord had assured him by his Angell that he would deliuer Israel out of the hands of the *Madianites* by his hand. Yet he is so hardly brought to beleeue this, as that
Iudg. 6. 14. 36. he asketh a signe: *If thou wilt saue Israel by my hands, as thou hast said, behold I will put a fleece of woll in the threshing place*, &c.
Gen. 17. 16 The like we haue in *Sarah*, albeit shee had heard the promise that God had made to *Abraham* her husband, that God would giue her a sonne, *I will blesse thee* (saith
Gen. 18. 12 God) *and giue thee a sonne. She laughed at it.* Which was as much as

as if she should haue said, This is a ieſt indeed. Wee may ſee this moſt cleare in the people of Iſrael, though the Lord from time to time had giuen good demonſtration of his loue, power, goodneſſe, and mercie towards them, which might haue cauſed that people for euer to haue truſted in his helpe, and neuer to haue deſpaired of the ſame in time of their greateſt need. Yet ſtill when the outward meanes of their deliuerance failed, they beleeued not Gods promiſes, inſomuch that the Lord againe and againe complaineth of them: *How long will this people prouoke me? How long will it bee ere they beleeue mee? for all the ſignes which I haue ſhewed among them?* And, *How oft did they prouoke him in the wilderneſſe, and grieued him in the deſert?* Num. 14. 11

The like example of mans im-

becillitie and weakneſſe in beleeuing the promiſes of God. Wee may ſee this in *Zachary*, the father of the *Baptiſt*, who bewrayeth his infidelitie in this, that could not be induced to beleeue the Angell
Luk. 1.13. touching a Sonne which *Elizabeth* his wife ſhould beare vnto him. Which promiſe the Angell amplified for the further confirmation of his faith. Firſt, by his Office, hee ſhould goe before Chriſt. Secondly, from the graces of God which ſhould be beſtowed vpon him, and the effects of his Miniſterie. Notwithſtanding all this, *Zachary* remaines ſtill incredulous and diſtruſtfull, ſaying
Ver. 18. vnto the Angell, *Whereby ſhall I know this?* The Angel had aſſured *Zachary* before, that the Lord had
Ver. 13. heard his prayer, *Feare not Zachary, for thy prayer is heard.* And yet hee is hardly brought to beleeue

leeue the promiſe. The like wee may ſee in *Peter*, a man full of faith, and the holy Ghoſt; in ſo much that when Chriſt bade him come vpon the Sea, hee left the ſhip, but a waue ariſing, his faith failed him. And thus was it with the Virgine *Mary*, when as the Angell came vnto her, and told her that ſhe had found fauour in the ſight of God: *How ſhall this bee* (ſaith ſhe) *ſeeing I know not a man?* It ſeemed to her a ſtrange thing, that ſhe ſhould haue a child when ſhee had not companied with a man. So that let the Lord promiſe immediately by himſelfe, by his Angels, or by men, yet are we hardly brought to beleeue: So hard and difficult a thing in the heart of a man faith is. Neither is this a thing to bee wondered at.

Mat. 8.

Luk. 1. 39.

For firſt, Faith is none of thoſe *Reaſ.* 1.

plants that grow in the garden of our hearts naturally: *No it is not of our ſelues* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *it is the gift of God.* Nature hath furniſhed vs with no principle at all concerning Chriſt, concerning eternall life, or the ſaluation of our ſoules. And hence it comes to paſſe, that becauſe the meanes whereby God vſually worketh faith in our hearts, and ſo conſequently ſaluation, ſeeme vnto our carnall reaſon to be *vnlikely*, wee preſently reiect them, like *Naaman*, when hee was commanded to waſh in Iordane ſeuen times: *Are not* (ſaith hee) *Abmah and Pharphar, riuers in Damaſcus, better then all the waters in Iordane?* Euen ſo that by Chriſts death we ſhould come to life, by his ſhame that we ſhould come to glory; by his ſtripes that wee ſhould bee healed; and that the

Ephes. 2. 8.

2. King. 5.

Iſa. 53. 5.

Goſpell

Gospell should bee the word of reconciliation, that hath no estimation for wisedome or authority in the world: O how hard a thing is this to bring our corrupt hearts to beleeue this?

Secondly, there are many things in the doctrine of saluation that are scandalous to the wicked. In which respect the Apostle saith, *That the preaching of Christ crucified, was to the Iewes a stumbling blocke, and to the Greekes, foolishnesse*; yea, Christ himselfe is to some a very *Rocke of offence*. How then is it possible that such should euer attaine this sauing grace truely to beleeue? 2 1 Cor. 1. 23. 1 Pet. 2. 8

And last of all, this is that treasure that God hath reserued for his children, & for none but those that are heyres of life, *To you it is giuen to beleeue*. And when the Apostles preached the Word, the 3 Phil. 1.

Acts 22. Text saith, *As many as were ordained to eternall life beleeved*, and is therefore called *the faith of Gods elect*. As for wicked and vngodly men, the Apostle concludeth of such, 1 Thes. 3. 2 *All men haue not faith.*

Vse 1. Seing then it is so hard and difficult a matter, truely to beleeue, this shewes that the faith of the greatest part of the world is no better then presumption, who albeit they neuer sought this grace at wisedomes house, nor at the word of faith, which is the Gospell, Rom. 10. *For how can they beleeue on him on whom they haue not heard?* yet perswade themselues that they haue faith as well as the best, as if it were so easie a matter truely to beleeue, which indeed no lesse power must effect in vs, then the Eph. 1. 19. *mighty power of God.* Such men doe wonderfully deceiue themselues.

selues. How many haue wee amongst vs that liue in grosse and palpable ignorance, and turne their backes vpon the ordinance of God, hauing no delight therin, liuing in all manner of open prophanenesse, these men must needs be strangers from the couenant of promise, and howsoeuer they may brag of their hope of eternall life, yet as the Apostle saith, *They are without hope, without God in the world.* Eph 2. 3.

Yea, but they beleeue, say they, all the Articles of the Christian faith, and repeate them daily. But this may be a dead and vaine faith, when it doth not worke by loue of piety towards God, and charitie towards men. And notwithstanding all this, the Lord will professe against such in the last day, *Depart from me ye workers of iniquity.* Mat. 7. 22.

Yea,

Yea, but they come to Church, heare the Word, receiue the Sacrament, pray to God, and meane well, though they be not so precise and forward as others are. O but consider that of the Apostle, *Without faith it is impossible to please God.* And againe, *The word which they heard, profited them not, because it was not mixed with faith in them that heard it.* It is faith that is all in all, that giues acceptation to all our seruice we doe vnto God, and without faith it is impossible to please him.

Heb. 4.

Heb. 11. 6.

Quest. But how may I know that my faith is true, and such a faith as is proper and peculiar onely to the elect, and not that common faith which may be in a common Protestant?

Answ. 1. First, by those proper fruits that follow a true iustifying faith, not onely a ciuill life, iust dealing, outward

outward performance of holy duties and the like, which may bee in a naturall man, and an vnbeleeuer.

But by those proper fruits of faith, which are peculiar onely to the elect; Such as are an inward loue of God, of his Word, and Children, a willing subiection of the heart and life to Gods will reuealed, a constant communion with his Maiestie in prayer, &c. which are the proper fruits of a true beleeuer, and euermore flow from a iustifying faith.

Secondly, by our daily increase in the workes of mortification to the old man, and workes of viuification to the new, wherein the faith of a true beleeuer is daily exercised, purging the heart, and purifying the conscience daily from dead workes, and inclining the same daily to the performance of

2

Acts 15.9.

of the duties of holineſſe readily and chearefully.

Vſe 2. Secondly, this may ſerue to admoniſh euery one to labour for the truth of this grace, as for ſaluation it ſelfe, without all which all thoſe excellent and pretious promiſes, profit not at all: *faith* is all in all in the matter of ſaluation yea, ſaluation it ſelfe is attributed thereunto, *Beleeue and thou ſhalt be ſaued*, where that is attributed to the inſtrument, which belongeth indeed to the principall efficient to ſhew the excellency of this grace in it ſelfe, as alſo the neceſſity therof in thoſe that look for life and ſaluation. This is that will ſtid vs in the euill day, that giues vs to participate of the new couenant, and will aſſure our hearts of the full fruition of euerlaſting life at laſt: *Verily, verily I ſay vnto you, hee that beleeueth*

Act 16.

Ioh. 3. 16.

on

on me, hath euerlasting life: where Christ bindes his promise of euerlasting saluation onely vnto the beleeuer, with the like assseueration he doth vnto this Penitent here, *Verily this day thou shalt bee with me, &c.*

And last of all, this may serue for ground of comfort vnto all Gods people, that they bee not discouraged, though they finde infidelity in them; wee haue no grace in this life in perfection, and they that haue had the greatest measure of faith, as wee haue heard, yet haue had the same mixed with doubtings and feares. And therefore it is recorded of the people of Israel, that when they were deliuered out of captiuity, *they were like men in a dreame.* Psal. 126. Onely wee are to take heed that wee doe not please our selues, or rest in any such doubtings, for that

that will bee marueilous vncom
fortable, but to labour to com
out thereof, and to get assurance
which is done by frequenting th
publike ministery of the Word
whereby faith is begotten and in
creased in vs, by the reuerent vs
Rom.4.11. of the Sacrament of the Lords
Supper, for that is the Seale of th
righteousnesse of faith, by renew
ing of our repentance daily, and
by keeping a more strict watch
ouer our liues, whereby wee shall
come daily more and more to bee
setled and stablished in our holy
and precious faith.

Text. *Verily I say vnto thee, &c.*

The next thing wee are to ob
serue in Christs asseueration, is
the certainty of his promise, the
which to perswade this Penitent
vnto, Christ is pleased to binde
with

with a kinde of oath, *verily. q. d.* Thou shalt not neede to doubt, or any way call into question that I now promise vnto thee, that thou shalt be this day with me in Paradice, for I assure thee thou mayest rest vpon it, that I will make good my word therein; though thou seest mee now without forme or beauty, forsaken of all, and accountest thy selfe vnworthy of such a mercy, *Verily I say vnto thee, this day, &c.*

That wee may obserue in the next place is, that

There is an vnchangeable certaintie in all Gods promises, his Word shall surely bee accomplished: *Heauen and earth shall passe away, but my Word shall not passe away.* He is not as man, that hee should lye, or the sonne of man that he should change. Hath hee said it, and shall hee not doe it? who

Doct. 2. There is an vnchangeable certainty in al Gods promises. Mat. 24.

who hath resisted his will? He is most iust in all his promises he maketh with his seruants, and will in his due time accomplish all his iudgements threatned against the wicked, hee is *yea* and *Amen, The faithfull and true witnesse. I will not falsifie my truth* (saith the Lord) *My couenant will I not breake, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.* Wee may see this in the Lords manner of dealing with his seruants, as to *Abraham, Dauid*, and the rest. *Thou wilt* (saith the Prophet) *performe thy truth to Iacob, and mercy to Abraham, as thou hast sworne to our forefathers in old time. I am the Lord, & change not*, and therefore he is called *Iehouah*, one, that as hee hath his being of himselfe, and from himselfe, so giueth he the being to all creatures, that haue their being,

Reu.2.

Psal.89.33

Mic.7.20.

Mal.3.6.

so

so likewise giueth he being to all his promises. This is that *Iosuah* obserueth concerning the Lords promises made vnto the people of Israel, *There fayled nothing of all the good things which the Lord had sayd vnto the house of Israel, but all came to passe.* Ios.21.44. We may see this in that first couenant and promise God made with *Adam* hauing sinned, *The seede of the woman shall bruise the Serpents head*; Gen.3 15. what though the same promise seemes to be forgotten, it being almost 4000. yeeres after, wherein God made the same good. Yet *when the fulnesse of time was come, God sent his Sonne.* Gal. 4.4. Wee must not tye the Lord to any time when to helpe, hee knoweth the fittest and the best time to relieue his distressed seruants.

Neither are we to be discouraged, though we be not by and by

deliuered out of miserie. The people of *Israel* were promised deliuerance out of captiuitie, yet it was a long time first. *Dauid* was delayed so long, before deliuerance came, as that hee crieth out, *How long wilt thou forget me?* Psal. 13. God dealeth with men herein as a Physitian dealeth with his Patient, when he requireth wine in the fit of a burning Feauer, I will not giue it, saith hee, not because he will neuer giue him wine, but because hee knoweth when it is best to giue it, thus dealeth hee with his seruant, making choice of the most seasonable time to send comfort.

And as the Lord will in his due time make good his promises vnto his children; so will he also make good those his denuntiations of iudgements against the wicked. What became of his denun-

denuntiation against the old world in the dayes of *Noah*? As God had a time to threaten, hee had a time also to punish. What became of that iudgement the Lord threatned against *Iericho*, that the man should bee accursed of God that should go about to reedifie that cursed Citie: *That he should lay the foundation in the blond of his eldest sonne, and reare vp the gates thereof in the blond of his youngest sonne.* What though this Iudgement seemed to be forgotten many hundred yeares, did not the Lord make the same good afterwards in *Hiel*? And so likewise concerning the Prince of *Samaria*, that would not beleeue the Prophet, touching that plentie the Lord would giue in that City, the iudgement threatned for his incredulitie was afterwards inflicted vpon him.

Gen. 7.

Ios. 6. 26.

1. King. 16. 34.

2. King. 7.

Though the Lord bee full of lenitie, to keepe off his hand a long time from the wicked, yet all his iudgements shall bee accomplished in their season, and in the end the Lord will pay them home. For whatsoeuer hee hath said in his Word shall surely come to passe. Though it go well with the wicked a while, and they flourish like a greene *Palme-tree*, though their Cow calue in due season, though they haue riches, and leaue Inheritances to their babes; yet there is a day of reckoning, when all things that God hath threatened shall be accomplished.

Reas. 1. *Mal.* 3. 6. And the reason hereof may be drawne from the vnchangeablenesse of Gods nature: *I am the Lord and change not.* Cursed *Balaam* can acknowledge this truth, perceiuing in himselfe how hee

was

was led by an ouer-ruling hand to bleſſe Gods people when hee faine would haue curſed them. *God is not* (ſaith he) *as man that he ſhould lye, neither as the ſonne of man that he ſhould repent. Hath he ſaid, and ſhall he not do it: hath he ſpoken, and ſhall he not accompliſh it? Hee is* (ſaith *Iob*) *of one minde, and who can turne him? He doth what his minde deſireth.* Num. 23. 19. Iob 23. 13.

Secondly, God is a God of power, able of himſelfe to performe and bring to paſſe whatſoeuer the purpoſe of his will is; for which cauſe he is called the *God of might*: able to do whatſoeuer hee will in heauen and earth. So ſaith God of himſelfe to *Abraham, I am God all-ſufficient*. The ſame ſaith he to *Iacob, I am God all-ſufficient, grow and multiply*. Our Sauiour Chriſt ſaith, *With God all things are poſſible*. Moſt Gen. 17. 1. Gen. 35. 11 Mat. 19. 26

plentifull be the places that commend vnto vs the power of God, and all to shew that nothing can hinder him from executing the purpose of his owne will.

Vse 1. Seeing then that there is such an vndoubted certaintie in Gods Word, both in respect of his promises made vnto the godly, as also in respect of his threatnings denounced against the wicked. This may serue for ground of singular comfort vnto the godly. For hereupon may they stay themselues in a comfortable expectation of all those promises he hath made vnto them in his Word. How many prophecies and promises hath the Lord already fulfilled for his Church and people, which were neither in the power of Sathan, nor in the craftie deuices of wicked men to make frustrate. Such as are the manifestation

ſtation of Chriſt in the fleſh; the calling of the Gentiles, &c. So ſhal it be touching all thoſe promiſes that are not yet accompliſhed. Such as are,

The calling of the Iewes; what though now they be cut off for a time, through their vnbeleefe, God hath promiſed to graft them in againe; and he will make good his promiſe. Rom. 11.

The ouerthrow of Antichriſt, *That hath made all Nations drunke with the wine of her fornication*: What though now ſhe ſit as a Queene, and ſaith, I ſhall ſee no more ſorrow, God will bring her plagues vpon her in that day, when he will viſit her in wrath, and render vengeance vpon her, for all her ſpirituall whoredomes ſhe hath committed, and innocent bloud of the Saints ſhe hath ſhed.

The reſurrection of our bodies, what though now they mould r to aſhes, and taſte of corruptio , they ſhall not periſh in corrupt - on, but the Lord Ieſus ſhall rai e them vp in the laſt day, and mak : theſe vile bodies of ours like vnt his glorious body.

The comming of Chriſt in iudgement; What though th curſed Atheiſts of the world ſay Where is the promiſe of his co ming, for ſince the beginning a 2. Pet. 3.4. things continue alike? *Yet the da of the Lord will come as a Thief in the night.* And hee that hath promiſed to come, will come, and will not tarry.

Yea, for whatſoeuer we haue promiſe, ſay, *I know whom I have* 2. Tim. 1, 12 *beleeued.* His word is vnchange able as himſelfe is, who is truth i ſelfe, and cannot lye.

2 And as this yeelds matter o comfort

comfort and consolation vnto the godly, in the vndoubted expectation of his promises that are yet to come; So serues it also to set out vnto vs, the miserie of all wicked and vngodly men, euery impenitent and hard-hearted sinner, for God will not dally with vs, but will in time make good all his threatnings hee hath denounced against sinne and sinners; for God is vnchangeable, true in the one, as in the other: he tendereth his iustice as he regardeth his mercy. Oh the miserie of euery impenitent and hard-hearted sinner, that lieth in sinne, and so vnder the curses of the Law, hee is as sure one day to partake of the same, as if he were vnder them already. And indeed if the question were asked, what difference there were betwixt the damned in hell, and the impenitent on earth: I know none

none other but this, the one is a reaping the reward of sinne, the other is a heaping vp of wrath against that day: the certainty of iudgement is to them both alike. O that all wicked and vngodly men could but see their happinesse, that that day is not yet come vpon them, but that the Lord doth yet afoord them a season of grace, and time to repent in; and that they would remember *Solomons* Prouerbe, *A prudent man foreseeth the euill, and hideth himselfe.* It is righteousnesse that deliuereth from death. Whereas *Riches auaile not in the day of wrath:* nor no outward thing can profit in the euill day.

Pro.22.3.

Pro.11.4.

Text. *Verily I say vnto thee.*

As Christ was pleased to compassionate this man in this time of his

his miserie, pardoning his sinnes, and receiuing him into fauour; so he would haue him perswaded of his loue herein, and no way to doubt or question the truth of his promise. *Verily I say vnto thee*,

Gods children as they haue Gods Word to assure them of the pardon of their sinnes vpon their repentance, so it is his pleasure that they should beleeue the same his promises vnto life and saluation, and no way to doubt of the truth thereof. This is the tenure of that couenant of grace God makes with his Church. *This shall be my couenant, I will make with the House of Israel, after those dayes, saith the Lord, I will put my Law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people*, &c. *And they shall all know me from the greatest of them*

Doct. 3. Godly must labor to be perswaded of Gods loue towards them.

Ier. 31. 33. 34.

to

to the least of them. It is the speech of the Spouse that speaketh thus, Can. 2. 16. *My beloued is mine, and I am his.* The Church there was throughly perswaded of Christs loue against me, 1 Ioh. 3. 1. Ver. 2. Ver. 14. *Behold* (saith Saint *Iohn*) *what loue the Father hath shewed vnto vs, that we should be called the sons of God. Now we are the Sonnes of God, &c.* and *hereby wee know, &c.*

Obiect. But this Theefe might know this, because Christ did assure him of the certaintie of his saluation: but what is that to vs, doth it therefore follow that we may?

Resp. Yes verily this comfort is not intayled and appropriated to this Penitent onely, but he would haue 2 Cor. 13. 5 all his seruants *to make their calling and election sure, and to worke out their saluation in feare and trembling*; and for the further clearing of this truth, consider

Fi[illegible]

Reas. 1.

First, that the promises of God howsoeuer they be made in generall tearmes, euery one is bound to make a particular application thereof vnto himselfe. As in Princes Lawes and Proclamations, all the Subiects stand bound to take notice thereof, and to make a particular application thereof vnto himselfe, as if the same law were made for his owne person. Euen so the Gospell and the promises therein made vnto the faithfull, runne in generall to all beleeuers. Now euery soule that would haue the comfort thereof, must make the particular application thereof vnto himselfe, according to that of the Prophet, *The iust shal liue by his owne faith.* Hab. 2. 5.

2 Secondly, euery one shall bee saued by a particular faith of his owne; no man can bee saued by another mans beleeuing, no more then

then one man can bee nourished by another mans feeding. *The iust shall liue by his owne faith.* No faith is of that nature that it is euer exercised about applying of Christ, his merits, his righteousnesse and obedience to the soule of euery true beleeuer.

3 Thirdly, the Lord to this end hath giuen vs his Sacraments which are called *the Seales of the* Rom. 4.11 *righteousnesse of faith*, and these we know are deliuered in particular to euery one, thereby to assure him of Christ, the pardon of his sinnes, and the saluation of his soule in particular.

The vses follow.

Vse 1. This serues then in the first place to let vs see what an vncomfortable Tenet that is in the Church of Rome, that teach and hold that no man in this life can attaine to any assurance of his saluation,

ſaluation, other then coniecturall, vnleſſe it bee made knowne vnto him by ſpeciall reuelation; nay, more by the Councell of Trent, he is in danger of an *Anathema*, that is, to be accurſed, that ſhall affirme that hee is aſſured of his ſaluation. He that will be a Papiſt, is bound by the rule of that religion, to the end and period of his dayes to liue in ſuſpence, a moſt vncomfortable religion, and then the which, what more vncomfortable Doctrine, it being the breakneck of all true comfort vnto a Chriſtian ſoule.

We teach and hold that a Chriſtian may doubt, which is not his vertue, inaſmuch as doubting is oppoſite vnto faith, and therefore if the one bee commanded, the other muſt needs bee forbidden. They teach & hold that we muſt doubt, and *let him be aſſured*, ſaith the

the Councell, if hee either thinke or indeuour any certaintie or assurance. *Miserable comforters* are they, as *Iob* saith of his friends: and herein what doe they else, but rob God of his glory, and depriue a Christian soule of his chiefest ioy.

Now I would not be mistaken, as though I meant that the comfort and assurance of a Christians saluation, were so firme and certaine, as that the same were neuer intermixed, and ouer-clouded. There is no such assurance in this life to bee looked for, nay rather Gods people haue felt much feare and doubtings in themselues. Esa.39. *Hezechias* complaines, that the Lord had *bruised his bones like a Lyon*. And *Dauid* is full of complainings, *I am cast out of thy sight*, Psal.31.23 *will the Lord shew no more fauour?* Psal 77.7. *and hath hee shut vp his louing kindnesse*

kindenesse in displeasure? And againe, *My eyes faint for wayting so long vpon my God.* Nay, I dare adde this further, that hee which neuer doubted of his saluation, had neuer true faith to beleeue aright the pardon of his sins, and the assurance of his saluation, for hadst thou faith, thou mightest assure thy selfe that Sathan would winnow thee. Psal. 69.3.

Quest. But what manner of assurance then is this you speake of?

Answ. Not an assurance that is free from doubtings and feares, but such an assurance that labours after assurance. Assurance that wrestles and combats with doubtings and feares. It is the wisedome of God by this meanes to settle and stablish the hearts of his seruants. A man that hath newly planted a tree, will bee euer and anone shaking of it, not purposing to ouer-

throw it, but to settle it the more: and thus the Lord by suffering the faith of his chosen sometimes to be shaken, will haue their hearts rooted and grounded in him, whilest they learne to denye themselues, and to rest in him their strength.

2 Secondly, seeing it is the pleasure of our good God, thus to cheere vp the hearts of his chosen in their Pilgrimage here, to fill their hearts with such ioyes, and to giue them such secret and sweet rauishments in the sence of his fauour in his Sonne, whereby with the Spouse they *rose themselues vp in the beds of roses*, as the confessor, and that to cause them so much the more cheerefully to serue him. This may serue for our instruction to try our hearts, and to see whether the worke of grace and of faith be wrought in vs. It is

Can.

adu ce

aduice of the Apostle, *Proue your selues whether ye be in the faith:* & how shall we doe this, but by making particular application vnto our selues of those things wee beleeue. In the matters of this life it is euery mans care to deale vpon certainties, for tenures of lands, for Conueyances, Leases, &c. Councell is entertained, and euery word therein is scanned, men will not deale but vpon good grounds. But alas, for the matter of our chiefe inheritance, how simply doe men deale therein, they are content to rest vpon a bare hope, and thinke that a *Lord haue mercy vpon mee*, will serue the turne. What meaneth the Apostle to say, *Giue all diligence to make your calling and election sure:* but to shew that a Christians chiefest care must be for this. 2 Cor. 13. 5

But how may a man come to this Quest.

this assurance of his saluation?

Answ. Wee must get good euidence and assurance of our faith in Christ, for so saith the Apostle, Ioh. 1. 12. *As many as beleeued in him, to them gaue he this power to be made the sonnes of God, euen to them that beleeue on his name.* And againe, *We are saued by faith.* No man can haue the spirit of adoption, that wants faith to beleeue.

Now for the obtayning of this grace of sauing faith, the ordinary meanes is the preaching of the Word: Rom. 10. 17 *faith commeth by hearing*, and the Gospell is called the *word of faith*: vpon that then we are to attend with all care and diligence, as we looke to get faith, and so consequently, the saluation of our owne soules.

2 Secondly, the Apostle giues this note how to know our adoption, and so consequently whether we

wee be in the state of saluation or not, *His spirit beareth witnesse to our spirit that we are the sonnes of God.* Rom.8.16.

Now concerning this testimony of Gods spirit, I will not make my selfe so skilfull to define what it is, it is better felt then expreſt. The Prophet calls it *The hearing of a voyce behinde vs,* whereby the heart comes to be perswaded of it reconciliation with God. Esa.38. 21.

Quest. But how shall I know that my perswasion is not presumption?

Anſ. There be two speciall markes whereby we may distinguish betwixt them.

Firſt, that vndoubtedly is the voyce of Gods spirit, when comfort and assurance is felt in the heart, after such time as the heart hath first beene humbled and cast downe in the sight and sence of sinne; *My heart* (saith *David*) *is as* Psal.

waxe, it is molten in the middeſt of my body, for in the time of a mans ſecuritie, when hee hath little or no apprehenſion of ſinne, then for a man to hope well, and ſo conclude of his owne ſaluation, is no ſtrange thing; nothing is more vſuall in the world amongſt meere naturall men that neuer felt the ſmart of ſinne, then to bragge and boaſt of this aſſurance of ſaluation: but alas, they raiſe vp this building but vpon a ſandy foundation, which will neuer ſtand in the time of tryall: for it is Gods manner of dealing vſually in this work of mans ſaluation, to lay full low, whom hee intendeth to aduance full high; by ſorrow to bring them vnto ioy, by death to bring them vnto life, and by their humiliation for ſinne, to bring them to glory: ſo that when a man hath once truely felt the ſmart of ſinne, when

when a man hath once combated with Gods wrath, and the terrors of hell haue possessed his soule, here is a good foundation to build the hope of heauen vpon, for humiliation is the ground of exaltation, and after this to stay a mans selfe vpon the promise of God in Christ, is vndoubtedly the voyce of Gods spirit, a token of true comfort, and a note of true ioy.

Secondly, when comfort ariseth from the comfortable vse of the meanes God himselfe hath appointed, such as are the preaching of the Word, the reuerent vse of the Sacrament, prayer, reading of the Scripture, meditation, &c. for the Lord is euer a maintainer of that course which hee himselfe hath sanctified and set apart to the same end: so then try thy assurance thus, hath it beene layd in godly sorrow for sinne? hast thou 2

attended the poasts of the Lord Sanctuary, &c. This is vndoubtedly the voyce of Gods spirit, and not of presumption. But if on the contrary part, thou neuer yet felt such griefe of heart for sinne, thy conscience did neuer yet torment thee in the sight and sence of sinne, neither hast thou euer had any delight in the Lords Sabbaoths, nor the duties of holinesse &c. O deceiue not thy own soule thy hope of heauen, of eternall life and saluation is meere presumption, and no true assurance.

Text. *Thou shalt be with me*

2 To whom. The next thing wee are to obserue, is the person to whom the promise is made, and that is the Penitent that had confessed a good confession, and had giuen a good testimony of his faith in Christ acknowledging

acknowledging his deitie at this time, when all the world despised him, and resting on him alone for life and saluation, to him is the promise made, *Thou shalt be with me.*

Doct. 1. The prayers of the godly very effectuall with God.

Whence we may note first of all, The wonderfull force of the prayers of the godly, how powerfull and effectuall the same are with God. Such as lay a good foundation in humiliation for sin, and haue laboured by true repentance their reconciliation with the Almightie, these are they that preuaile most of all with God in prayer. See we this in the example of this poore *Penitent*, who hauing giuen good testimonie of his true repentance and conuersion vnto God, how powerfull is he in prayer, what a gratious answer doth the Lord giue vnto him, Verily, thou shalt bee with me.

The

The best way to haue our wills satisfied and our requests gr ted, is to be godly, for to such i the promise made. *God is neare a all that call vpon him, yea to al that call vpon him in truth. He will fulfill the desires of those that feare him, he also will heare their cry and will helpe them.* We may see this in the Lords me cifull dealing with the people of Israel, who being sore oppressed b the *Canaanites*, who tooke of them prisoners, they humbled themselues, and besought the Lord, and the Text saith, *The Lord heard the voyce of Israel.* Ye the Lord to testifie that his readie disposition, to heare and to grant the prayers of his seruants, declareth by his Prophet, saying, *Before they call I will answer and whileſt they speake I will heare.* Thus *Dauid*, *I called vpo the Lord*

Pſal. 145. 18. 19.

Num. 21. 3.

Iſa. 65. 24.

Pſal. 120. 1

Lord in trouble, and he heard me. The faithfull being suters vnto God, are alwayes sure of good successe, yea many times aboue that they aske or thinke, as wee shall see hereafter in this Penitent, that the Angell telleth *Cornelius*, a godly man, that *his praiers were heard.* Yea the more Gods people can get their hearts to be broken and humbled in the sence of their sinnes, the more powerfull and effectuall are their prayers with God. *A broken and contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.* This *David* found by comfortable experience in himselfe, that when in the pride of his heart hee had numbred the people, for whose sinne the Lord sent that grieuous plague vpon them. When hee humbled himselfe, before the Lord, confessed his sinne: *It is I that haue sinned: But what haue*

Act. 10. 4.

Psal. 51. 17.

1. Chron. 21. 17. 27.

these

these sheepe done? How sudd enly vpon this did the Lord com and the Angell to put vp his sw ord? When Israel was in great ffli-ction and distresse, still *They ried vnto the Lord in their tro bles,* and the Text saith, *He deli ered them out of their distresse.* How powerfull were the praye s of *Moses* against the *Amalekites* that Israel preuailed all the whil the hands of *Moses* were held vp and he besought the Lord in th be-halfe of the people: Yea *oash* doth acknowledge that the ray-ers of *Elisha*, an holy Proph et of God, stood his kingdome in nore stead, then all the chariot and horsemen of Israel could do.

Psal. 107. 10.

Exod. 17.

2. King. 13. 14.

Neither is this to be wor dred at, that the prayers of the fai nfull are of this force with God to pre-uaile with him. For,

Reas. 1.

First, God giueth vnto his chosen

chosen ones the *Spirit of supplication and prayer*; Which doth so enable the faithfull vnto this duty, that they will haue no nay, or receiue no repulse at Gods hand, according to that of the Apostle; *This is the assurance we haue in God, that if we aske any thing according to his will, he heareth vs. And if we know that he heareth vs, whatsoeuer we aske we know that we shall haue the petitions we desire of him.* Zach. 12. 1. Ioh. 5. 14. 15.

2 Secondly, to comfort the hearts of his seruants, and to minister vnto them a comfortable expectation to be heard in praier, he is pleased to passe his promise out of his owne mouth, and to assure vs by his owne word, that we shall obtaine our desires, saying, *Aske, and ye shall haue: seeke, and ye shall finde: knocke, and it shall be opened vnto you. For euery* Mat. 7. 7.

one that asketh, receiueth, &c. This is indeed the very ground-worke and foundation of the Christian prayer, namely, Gods promise, which is as true and vnchangeable as himselfe is, without which wee could neuer so confidently come vnto him.

Obiect. But many of the godly haue praied much and often vnto God, and yet the Lord seemeth not to heare nor to answer?

Answ. God doth not forget his seruants, though for a time he defer to answer. God made *Abraham* a promise of a sonne by *Sarah*, this *Abraham* expected, ten, twentie, yea almost thirtie yeares, who would haue thought all this while that God had forgot his promise? but yet we know at last in a seasonable time God remembred the couenant and promise that he made with *Abraham*, and

Sarah

Sarah had a ſonne. The Lord promiſed the poſteritie of *Abraham* the Land of *Canaan*, yet in what a miſerable bondage were they in, in Egypt vnder *Pharaoh*, and that for the ſpace of foure hundred and thirtie yeares; who would not haue thought that ſurely God had not remembred his promiſe to *Abraham*? yet at laſt the Lord brought them out with a mightie hand and ſtretched out arme.

But what might be the reaſon of the Lords dealing with his people after this manner? *Queſt.*

Doubtleſſe God delayeth to anſwer the requeſts of his ſeruants till a more ſeaſonable time; like a skilfull Phyſitian, whom when his Patient being ſicke of a burning Feauer, ſhall aske wine, will not giue it him, knowing indeed that that is no time to drink wine. *Anſ.*

wine. The Lord, in whose hands are times and seasons, chuseth euer a fit time to answer the requests of his seruants.

2 Secondly, the Lord will haue many times the case of his seruants desperate, and they themselues past all hope of deliuerance, in respect of any humane helps; to the end his owne power, goodnesse and mercy should bee acknowledged in sending vnto them vnexpected deliuerance. How could the *Iews* but acknowledge Gods goodnesse towards them in the time of *Hester*, when they were all appointed vnto death, when besides all hope the Lord sent them deliuerance? How could Israel but acknowledge his mightie power and stretched out arme, when they came out of the land of *Egypt*, when the Sea was before them, the *Egyptian* be-

hinde

hinde them: the mountaines on each hand of them, and they left voide of all humane helpe and meanes to escape? Now was it a seasonable time for the Lord to steope in, that his owne power and stretched-out arme might be seene. At what a low ebbe did the Lord bring *Daniel*, and those three worthies, when one in the *Lyons* den, the other in the fierie fornace, when all hope of deliuerance was past, and humane help failed, then was his power most seene, and then was deliuerance most seasonable. Exod. 15. Dan. 3.

Thirdly, in Gods delayes then is there a seasonable time for the exercise of all those graces that hee hath betrusted his seruants withall, such as are, patience, faith, hope, &c. For it is the storme that proues the Mariner; and the battell, the Souldier: whose experi- 3.

ence and valour till then cannot be knowne.

Vse 1. If the prayers of Gods seruants be thus powerfull and effectuall with him, This may be a notable incouragement for all Gods people, to be frequent in this duetie, and to be inceſſant in their prayers, and not to giue him ouer, though wee be not answered at firſt. No doubt *Hanna* and *Zachary* had often prayed for children, yet obtained not. Notwithſtanding they prayed ſtill, and at laſt the Lord heard them. So

Dan. 10. 12 *Daniel* he was in heauineſſe three weekes of dayes, and to his thinking God heard him not, yet the Lord heard him indeed from the firſt day, as hee ſaid to *Daniel*, *From the first day that he had set his heart to vnderstand.*

Paul when the pricke of the fleſh was giuen vnto him, the meſſe-

ger

senger of Sathan was sent to buffet him; hee therefore besought the Lord that it might depart from him. But he receiued this answer, *My grace is sufficient for thee, my power is made perfect in thy weakenesse.* *Paul* was heard though not at the first: and therefore when we shall pray for some blessing of the Lord, which we stand in need of, or when we shall craue power of the Lord ouer some vnruly affection of ours; though we haue not answer by and by, yet wee are not to leaue off. This Christ teacheth vs when he saith, *Shall not God auenge the elect, that cry day and night vnto him?* Marke there Christs sweet application of that vnrighteous Iudge, to teach vs to continue our suites, and to hold out, and then we shall not misse in the end. 2.Cor.12. 7.8.9. Luk.18.

Secondly, this shewes the hap- 2

pie priuiledge of Gods Chu ch and people, that no man ſho ld

Mal. 3. 14. ſay, *It is in vaine to ſerue the Lord, and what profit is it tha we haue kept the commandements, nd haue walked humbly before hi m?* It is ſure to go well with th m, they are in great credit & eſte me in the Court of heauen; they are all Fauourites to the great K ng of heauen and earth, and he h ath commanded ſuch at all time to haue free acceſſe vnto him, an d to inlarge their deſires with a ro-miſe of a gracious anſwer,

Ioh. 16. 24. (ſaith our Sauiour) *and ye ſha re-ceiue, that your ioy may bee full.* What though for a time the y lie vnder troubles and ſorrowes, mi-

Rom. 8. 37. ſeries and afflictions, *Are they not herein more then conquer urs through him that hath loued t em?* The preſent miſeries of the f th-full cannot hinder their ha pi-

neſſe,

neſſe, but through the Lords goodneſſe they ſhall make way to their euerlaſting felicitie.

Let all Gods people then walk worthy of this calling, and take heed that they no way forfeit his fauour and loue. There is no comfort like vnto this in this life, at all times to haue free acceſſe into Gods preſence, and to haue a comfortable returne of our prayers, to obtaine health in ſickneſſe, reſt in trouble, ſafetie in danger, ioy in ſorrow, comfort in aduerſitie, yea hope in death, and aſſurance of future happineſſe with this Penitent here when wee depart hence: then the which what greater royalties and priuiledges can there belong to any?

Thirdly, ſeeing all the faithfull are thus ſure of audience, and a comfortable returne of their praiers at all times; This may prouoke 3

all Gods people to be frequent in this dutie, *The righteous cry, and the Lord heareth and deliuereth them out of all their troubles.* And
Psal.81.10. againe, *The Name of the Lord is a strong Tower, the righteous flie vnto it, and are helped.* The Lord doth call vpon vs that we should
Psal.50.15 call vpon him. *Call vpon mee in the time of trouble, and I will heare thee, and deliuer thee.* This is the onely refuge of a Christian in time of trouble and distresse. Only care must be had, that wee be earnest and constant in our suite.
Iam.5.16. *For the prayers of the righteous auailes much, if it be feruent.* God
Psal.72.12. *deliuereth the poore when hee crieth.* If wee would haue hearing, there must bee crying. *God poureth forth flouds of grace:* But
Isa.44.3. vpon whom? *On the thirsty ground.* Indeed many pray, and preuaile not, because they do

f

so drowsily and carelesly, the Lord defers to keepe them, because they are not fit for helpe, they striue and wrestle not with God as *Iacob* did, and this is the reason that the godly many times are not answered in prayer.

Thou shalt be with me Text.

Many were the offences of this man, and of long continuance, yet mercy in a moment taketh them all away: very sweet and comfortable may our lesson be,

That the sinnes of the Penitent cannot hinder their saluation, but the Lord is mercifull to great sinners when once they come to see their sinnes, and truely conuert and turne vnto him; wee may see the truth hereof in this present example. Here we haue an example of humane frailtie, of a man led

Doct. 2. The sins of the Penitent cannot hinder saluation.

by the sway and swinge of his owne corruptions, one that had runne riot a long time, liuing by rapine, cruelty, cutting of throats, shedding of bloud, and in all manner of excesse, without God in this world, led by the god of the world, yet now at last receiued into fauour. It skils not what our sinnes are, or how great they haue beene, but how true our sorrow and vnfained our repentance is: repentance going before, mercy euer followeth after. This the Prophet teacheth in the name of the Lord, *Wash you, make you cleane, put away the euill of your doings from before my eyes, cease from euill, &c. Come now and let vs reason together saith the Lord, Though your sinnes be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, and though they be red like crimson, &c.* The same the Lord declareth

by

by his Prophet *Ezechiel*, where he ſaith, *If the wicked will turne from the ſinnes he hath committed, and keepe my ſtatutes, and doe the thing that is lawfull and right, he ſhall ſurely liue and not dye.* This truth is further cleared by that of *Iob*, *God* (ſaith hee) *looked vpon men, and if one ſay I haue ſinned and peruerted righteouſneſſe, and it doth not profit me, he will deliuer his ſoule from going into the pit, and his life ſhall ſee the light.* Yea, this is the thing that *Salomon* prayeth for in that excellent prayer of his at the dedication of the Temple, *If they turne vnto thee with all their hearts, in the land to the which they be carried captiues, and returne, and pray vnto thee ſaying, We haue ſinned, wee haue tranſgreſſed and done wickedly, then heare thou their prayer in heauen, &c.* Conſider the

Ezec.18 21 22.13.

Iob 33.27. 28.

1 Reg.8 47

2 Chro. 33 12. 13. the example of *Manasses*, how desperately wretched and [u]nfull soeuer hee had beene, yet [i]n his captiuity, returning vnto the [L]ord with all his heart, found [m]ercy with him. Of *Peter* that de[n]yed Luk. 17 48 Act. 16. 26. his Master, of *Paul* that pe[r]secuted the Church, of *Dauid* that committed Adultery and [M]urther, of *Salomon* that fell to i[d]olatry, of *Mary Magdalene*, o[u]t of whom were cast seuen deu[i]s, of Act. 2. 37. the Iewes that crucified the [L]ord of life, of the Iaylour, &c. All which repenting of their [si]nnes, and returning from their in[i]quities, had their sinnes pard[o]ned, and were themselues receiu[e]d into fauour: neither is this a [th]ing to be wondred at, for,

Reas. 1. First, consider that it is a [th]ing agreeable to Gods iustice, th[a]t he should be gratious and mer[ci]full to those that truely repent, [o]r so faith

ſaith the Apoſtle, *If wee confeſſe our ſinnes, he is faithfull and iuſt to forgiue vs our ſinnes, and to cleanſe vs from all vnrighteouſneſſe.* Vpon this ground, the holy Apoſtle tearmes that which God will beſtow at the day of account vpon the elect, *a Crowne of righteouſneſſe*, and that which ſhall be conferred vpon them by that righteous Iudge, not becauſe the workes of the faithfull are meritorious, as the gloſſe of the Papiſts is vpon that place, but becauſe of the Lords mercifull promiſe made vnto euery true beleeuer in Chriſt, and hauing made himſelf a debtor by promiſe (ſaith an Antient) it is agreeable to iuſtice that he ſhould performe the ſame.

Secondly, to haue ſinne pardoned, is a ſpeciall priuiledge of the Church, and the members of it onely. 2

Esa.33.24. onely. *Thy people that dwell there shall haue their iniquities forgiuen.* Yea, it is part of that promise God hath made to those that are within the couenant. *The dayes come saith the Lord, that I will make a new couenant, for I will forgiue their iniquitie, and remember their sinnes no more.*

3 A third reason may bee taken from the nature of true repentance, which doth as fully blot out sinne out of Gods account, as if the same had neuer beene committed, for whereas sinne is a *debt, forigue vs our debts*; Repentance is a cancelling of that band, and a discharging of that debt.

Vse 1. Seing then that the sinnes of the penitent cannot hinder their saluation, this Doctrine may bee a *Noahs* Doue, a messenger of glad tydings vnto the godly, and that which may yeeld singular com-

fort

fort to euery penitent ſinner. Is thy heart truely humbled in the ſence of thy ſinnes? is it thy chiefeſt griefe and ſorrow that thou haſt offended ſo good and ſo gratious a God and Father in Ieſus Chriſt? doth thy ſpirit droope and groane vnder the burthen of thy tranſgreſſions, ſo as thou abhorreſt thy ſelfe with *Iob*, and repenteſt in duſt and aſhes? Thou canſt paſſe the ſentence of condemnation againſt thy ſelfe, acknowledging that if the Lord ſhould doe thee iuſtice, he might iuſtly condemne thee for euer. Conſider then for thy comfort, this being thy caſe, God cannot with-hold from thee comfort, it cannot ſtand with the rule of iuſtice to deny thee mercy. Nay, more, thou mayſt in a holy boldneſſe challenge God of his word and promiſe, which it cannot ſtand Iob 42.6.

ſtand with his honour and iuſtice not to performe. God ſhould not be iuſt in his promiſes, if he ſhould not pardon the ſinnes of the penitent.

O how may this comfort the hearts of ſuch as mourne in Sion, that hang downe their heads & being aſhamed to lift vp the face to heauen, that goe mourning all the day long; let ſuch comfortably apply this doctrine vnto themſelues. Thou deſireſt nothing more in all the world, then Gods fauour, his countenance & grace, and it is thy greateſt griefe that thou inioyeſt it not: Remember to thy comfort, Chriſt *will not* Mat 12.20 *quench the ſmoaking flaxe*, nor breake aſunder the bruiſed reed; he can as well deny himſelfe, and ceaſe to be God, as to deny mercy to thoſe that truely ſee their ſinnes, are humbled for them, and ſue vnto

vnto him for the pardon of the same. And for thy further comfort herein, consider that thy sins, whatsoeuer they haue beene, haue beene but the sinnes of a poore, weake, and fraile man, and the mercy thou shalt haue in the pardon of them, is the mercy of a God, euen of a *God of mercy*, betwixt which there is no comparison.

Quest. But doth not God without repentance, grant remission of sins, how then is remission of sinnes, saluation, and eternall life his free gift?

Answ. I answer, that remission of sins, and eternall life, is his free gift.

1 First, because howsoeuer they are not giuen without repentance and faith, yet they are not giuen for these things sake.

2 Secondly, euen these gifts and graces, truely to repent, and to beleeue,

beleeue, are not of our selues, neither are they common to all, but they come from God, *promising* (saith the Apostle) *if at any time God will giue them repentance vnto life.*

1 Tim.

3 Thirdly, repentance and faith are requisite not to shew for what, but rather to shew to whom remission of sinnes, and eternall life doth belong and appertaine, and serue to qualifie Gods people for the promises of life and saluation.

Vse 2. Secondly, seeing that repentance for sinne doth thus qualifie a man for remission of sinnes, and so for life and saluation: it shall then bee our wisedome to labour for repentance aboue all things in the world, to lay hold vpon the opportunitie of grace offered, and speedily to returne, not to defere the same from day to day, lest our hearts come to bee hardened through

through the deceitfulneſſe of ſin: take wee heed that wee doe not abuſe his patience and forbearance, or take occaſion of libertie to turne this grace of his into wantonneſſe: *Shall we ſinne* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *becauſe grace ſhould abound? God forbid.* Nay rather let vs know that *they that wait vpon lying vanities, forſake their owne mercy.* The longer that any remaine in the mire of ſinne, the after they ſticke therein; God will not at all times offer the like mercy, neither will he euer ſtand and knocke at the dore of our hearts; let vs then lay hold vpon the opportunitie offered, leſt our repentance at laſt come too late.

Rom. 2. 4. Rom. 6. 1. 2

Ion. 2. 8.

Reu. 3.

Thirdly, ſeeing wee haue ſuch a mercifull God & louing Father, that is ſo ready to ſhew mercy, and to receiue vt into fauour vpon our true repentance; Let vs labour

Vſe 3.

to bee like vnto God, and shew that wee are children of such a Father, by our long sufferance towards our brethren that iniure vs. There is no one thing that doth more manifestly declare the image of God to be renewed within vs, then this propensenesse and ready disposition to forgiue the iniuries of our brethren.

How earnestly doth the Apostle perswade vnto this duty, when he saith, *Put on therefore the elect of God, holy and beloued, bowels of mercy, kindenesse, humblenesse of minde, meekenesse, long suffering, forbearing one another, &c.* And to this end Christ propoundeth that parable in the Gospell, of the King taking account of his seruants, and there shewes the mercifull dealing of him that hadten thousand talents forgiuen him, yet would take his fellow

fellow by the throate for tenne talents; and therein will teach vs that if we would haue pardon at Gods hand for the greater, wee must forgiue the lesser, whereas such as wil not forgiue the iniuries of others, this shewes that they are stamped with the very image of Sathan, who was malitious and a murtherer from the beginning, and indeed there shall be iudgement mercilesse to him that sheweth not mercy.

Shalt be with me

Here wee haue the promise it selfe, which is to be with Christ in his glorious kingdome. That in as much as by faith he was able to discerne Christs Deity in this base and low degree of his humiliation, and by a liuely faith did rest on him alone for life and saluation. Christ will not suffer his faith to faile, nor himselfe to bee

Text.

3. *Promise it selfe.*

disappointed of the end thereof, but grants him his hearts desire. *Verily thou shalt be with me.* The Instruction is,

Doct. 1. They that in misery wait vpon God, shall not misse of comfort in the end.

That they that in miserie seeke vnto God, and rest on him shall bee sure of comfort in the end. There is no labour lost in seeking and serving of him, but howsoeuer their present miseries are great, yet as *Mordecai* said to *Hester*, *Deliuerance will come. Let thy heart be in the feare of the Lord continually* (saith *Solomon*) *for surely there is an end, and thy hope shall not bee cut off.* So *Dauid*, *Marke the vpright man, and behold the iust, the latter end of that man shall bee peace. Whereas the hope of the wicked shall perish.* And as *Iob* saith, *What hope hath the hypocrite when God shall take away his soule?* Meaning indeed hee hath no hope. And againe, *There*

Pro. 23. 17.

Psal. 37. 37

Pro. 11. 7.

Iob 27. 8.

is no peace to the wicked, saith my God. So that the condition of Gods people, euen in their deepest aduersities and miseries, is farre better then the condition of the wicked, in their chiefest prosperitie: For the one is sure that the end of his life will end his misery, and finish his sorrow, and enter his possession of euerlasting felicitie. Whereas the candle of the wicked at last shall be put out, and their fleeting pleasures which they haue had for a time heere, shall bring at last an eternall weight of torment, as our Sauiour saith, *Woeto you that laugh, for you shall waile and weepe.* Would we haue some examples for the further clearing of this truth? How many miseries did the Israelites go vnder, and that for the space of foure hundred and thirtie yeares, yet at last the Lord gaue

Isa.48.22.

Luk.6.

gaue them rest in the promised Canaan? How long was *Dauid* persecuted before he came to th kingdome, and after, yet at last the Lord gaue him rest? Againe, how sore were his inward feares and terrours by reason of sinne, yet at the last filled with comfort How dealt the Lord with *Iob* both in respect of his outward man, and temporall estate, of a great Prince the Lord brought him to the dunghill. And for his soule, doth hee not often complaine, that God *Had set him as a But to shoote at.* And that the Arrowes of the Almighty had drunke vp his spirits, yet at last dyed peaceably? And there is reason for it.

Reas. 1. *Psal.* 50. 15

First, the Lords owne promise, *Call vpon mee in the time of thy trouble, and I will heare thee, and deliuer thee.* Which promise of his

his the Lord hath euer made good from time to time, putting an end at last vnto the miseries of his seruants, and giuing them rest: and in this regard there is nothing in all the world more sure and certaine, then the good successe of the hope of Christians, it neuer misseth of that it aymeth at, for their *hope* which is the *Anchor* of the soule, hath *faith* for the ground of it, whereupon it fasteneth it selfe. And further, Gods truth and faithfulnesse to assure them of the truth thereof. Rom. 5. 5.

Secondly, it is God that inclineth the heart to seeke him, and causeth the soule so to hunger and thirst after him. All which are cleare demonstrations that the Lord hath a purpose to giue them comfort at last. Vpon this verie ground *Dauid* concludeth the helpe and deliuerance of Gods

Psal.10.17. people in distresse, *Lord* (saith he) *thou heares the desire of the poore: thou prepares their heart, and thine eare inclineth thereunto.*

Thirdly, God delaying to helpe his seruants by and by in time of miserie and distresse, doth prouoke them to pray so much the more earnestly and frequently vnto him, drawing away the heart from the world, and causing the soule to haue the more secret communion with the Almightie, and so must needs bring comfort in the end:

Vse 1. Seeing then that those that seeke vnto God, and wait vpon him, shall haue comfort in the end, as we see in this poore Penitent here. This may serue then in the first place to stay the godly in the time of their sorest trials, not to despaire, not to murmure, repine and complaine, as if their case

caſe were deſperate: *For in due time they ſhall reape, if they faint not.* What though for a time they beare the burthen and the heate of the day, when the Euening commeth they ſhall not miſſe of their reward; and then they ſhall ſee, and acknowledge with the Apoſtle, *That theſe light and momentany afflictions which are but for a ſeaſon, ſhall bring with them an eternall recompence of reward.* Luk. 21,18
In the meane time let vs *poſſeſſe our ſoules in patience:* tarrie the Lords leaſure, and waite vpon him; our labour ſhall not bee in vaine in the Lord. After all the boyſterous ſtormes in this life, wreſtlings againſt ſinne, Sathan, and our owne corruptions, and againſt malitious and wicked men, *Deliuerance will come*, and the godly ſhall find it moſt true in the end, that they that waite vpon

vpon him shall not bee ashamed.

2 Secondly, it may serue to admonish vs, that we take heed that we do not preuent the Lord, and forestall that comfortable issue we might haue of our miseries and afflictions, either by not seeking of him, when miserie is vpon vs, or by vnlawfull wayes and meanes to seeke to come out of them. This is indeed to rob God of that honour that is due vnto him, in waiting for his helpe; and our selues of that comfort we might otherwise haue, of a seasonable deliuerance if we had sought and waited vpon him.

Thou shalt be with me.

That is, with the soul of Christ, for his body went from the crosse to the graue, q. d. Since thou hast confessed my name, and desirest principally the fruition of mee, thou shalt be satisfied in the thing

thou

thou desirest, *Thou shalt be with me.* Note hence,

That the soules of the faithfull after this life haue the fruition of Christ, and are gathered vnto him. So soone as the soule goeth out of the body, it goeth immediately to heauen, or hell. The Scripture maketh mention but of two wayes, the *broad*, and the *narrow*, and these leade but vnto two places, either to *endlesse blisse*, or into *Euerlasting torment*; there is a Paradise you see here for the *Penitent*, or an *Abrahams bosome* for a *Lazarus*. And there is again a *Gulfe of hell* for the *Glutton*, or *Euerlasting torment* for the *Impenitent*. No third place can bee found in all the Scripture.

So Paul, I desire to be dissolued, and to be with Christ. The faithfull can bee no sooner dissolued, or their soules set at libertie, but they are

Doct. 2. The souls of the faithfull in death are gathered to Christ. 12

Luk. 23. 42.

Luk. 16.

Phil. 1. 23.

are gathered vnto Christ. As for the wicked, with *Iudas* they go
Act. 1. to their *owne place*, that is, to *Hell*, out of which there is no redemption.

Reas. And it must needs be so, in regard that Christ is the head of beleeuers, and they are his body, yea euery true beleeuer is a member of this body. Now it is impossible that the head should be glorified, but the members must needs participate with the same glory together with the head. This Christ prayeth for of his
Ioh. 17. 24. Father, *Father I will that those thou hast giuen me, be with mee where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast giuen me.*

Vse 1. This meeteth with the doctrine of *Purgatory* so much vaged and pressed by the Church of *Rome*, as the most gainfullest doctrine of their Church. It is wonderfull

to

to see how the great Rabbies of that Church are troubled about this fire of *Purgatory*, both what it is, where it is, how long it shall burne, the conditions of those persons that shall haue that fauour to come into it, and the like: some holding one thing, some another. Some hold it to be Saint *Patrickes* hole in *Ireland*: some, *Etna*, that Mountaine in Sicily, that burneth continually: or in the *Popes* Kitchin, they should say, where there is indeed a *true fire*, maintained daily by the Fees that come in by that *imaginarie* fire.

But what shall I say, it is a doctrine that as it hath no footing at all out of the word of God; so were the Primitiue Fathers themselues, either strangers vnto it, or doubtfull of it. *Augustine* who liued foure hundred yeares after Christ,

Aug. de Ciuit. Dei. lib. 21. Ch. 26.

Christ, plainly sheweth, that in his time it was not receiued, nor beleeued for any Article of Faith, and in some places of his writings he absolutely denieth it.

Tertium locum penitus ignoramus.

Fisher, sometimes Bishop of *Rochester*, ingeniously confesseth, That there is no Scripture to proue *Purgatory*; and may we not iustly deny that for the which there is no Scripture to proue it? Nay more, he confesseth, that seldome or neuer any mention is made of *Purgatory*, either among the Greeke or Latine writers.

Roff. contra assert. Luth.

Nay rather the Scriptures teach the contrary, as that of *Isaiah*, *They shall enter vpon peace, and they shall rest vpon their beds, euery one that walketh before the Lord in righteousnesse.* And amongst all those sacrifices that were appointed in the time of the law, for the *Prince*, for the *Priest*, and

Legat qui volet Graecorum commentarios et nullū quātum opinor de Purgatorio sermonē inueniet, &c.

Isa. 57. 2.

and for the *Congregation*, all were appointed for the liuing, and none that euer wee reade of were appointed for the dead. Doubtlesse either God was very forgetfull of them, or else this Doctrine of *Purgatory* was not hatched. Leu. 5. 6.

When *Paul* directs the Church how they should carry themselues towards the *dead*, he giues no direction at any time to pray for the dead. Saint *Iohn* saith, *Blessed are the dead that dye in the Lord.* And the holy Ghost addeth further, *From henceforth they rest from their labours.* Now to *enter vpon peace*, and to *rest from their labours*, and yet to suffer hellish torments for many yeares, are things incompatible, and cannot stand together. Besides Christ hath promised *rest*, and *refreshing* to those that are *heauy laden*, and come vnto him, saying, *Come vn-* Phil. 3. Reu. 14. 13.

to

Mat.11.28 *to me all ye that trauaile, and are heauie laden, and I will refreſh you:* Now what *refreſhing* and *reſt* is this, to frie in the flames of *Purgatory?*

Surely the Scriptures know no ſuch third place, but that the ſouls of the righteous, ſo ſoone as euer they depart out of the body, they go with the ſoule of this *Penitent* here into *Paradiſe*, or into *heauen* the place of euerlaſting ioy and felicity. And the ſoules of the wicked go immediatly to *Hell*, a place of euerlaſting torment, there is no middle place betwixt theſe. But as there are but two ſorts of perſons, ſo there are but two ſorts of places. Beſides it ſtands not with the rule of Iuſtice, that the ſoule ſhould be puniſhed without the body, ſince the body and the ſoule were copartners together in ſinne. But the Church of Rome knew

knew well enough what it did to broach this doctrine, and what they do in maintaining the same at this day. But we wil leaue them and come vnto our selues.

This may serue for matter of singular comfort and consolation vnto the godly, that inasmuch as the soules of the faithfull in death are gathered vnto Christ; they may comfort themselues, that this worke of repentance for sinne, of mortification, of sanctification, howsoeuer it may seeme painfull for a time, yet it will bee gainfull in the end. Let such then comfort their hearts and say, *O my soule returne thou vnto thy rest, for the Lord hath beene beneficiall vnto thee.* And say with *Dauid, Though I walke through the valley of the shadow of death, I will feare none ill, for thou art with me.* This, this is it that makes the true be-

2

Psal. 23.

leeuer looke death in the face, and supports him against the feares of the graue, an assured perswasion in death to be gathered vnto Christ, yea it is a true note of an honest heart, so to walke with God in life, as willingly and cheerfully to imbrace the sentence of death at last. Wheras on the contrary, it is a note of a soule soyled with corruption, or else indued but with a small measure of sanctification, to bee kept vnder the continuall feare of death.

Paradice.

4 Place. The Scriptures make mention of a twofold Paradice, Terrestriall and Celestiall: The Terrestriall or earthly Paradice, is that Paradice in the which *Adam* was placed by God himselfe, a place of excellent felicitie, beauty and glory, and out of the which, both *Adam* and his posterity after him, euen

Gen. 2. 8.

vnto

vnto this day were cast by reason of their sins. There is besides this, the Celestiall Paradice, or the kingdome of heauen, into the which the Lord Iesus Christ, the second *Adam*, was now to enter, and doth promise this Penitent here the fruition therof with himselfe, whereby is meant indeed the happie and blessed estate of glorified soules in the kingdome of heauen, as it appeareth plainly by that of the Apostle *Paul*, that when hee was caught vp into Paradice, he was caught vp indeed into the third heauen. 2 Cor. 12.

Quest. But why doth our Sauiour call heauen by the name of Paradice?

Answ. In regard no place on earth could better resemble the kingdome of heauen, and being to speake to men, and not to Angels, Paradice was the most excellent place, a place of pleasure, solace,

and of all delight, and therefore did most fitly shadow out the variety and excellency of those delights and pleasures in the kingdome of heauen. And herein will teach vs,

Doct. In heauen is the perfection of happinesse.

That in heauen there is the perfection of all happinesse, of pleasure and delight.

The great pleasures in the garden of *Eden*, where there were trees of all sorts, and Riuers for pleasures and delight, doth most excellently shadow out vnto vs, those pleasures reserued for the Saints in Gods kingdome, which happinesse of euery true beleeuer shall in the last day appeare to the whole world, to men and Angels, when he shall come as the Apostle saith, *To be glorified in his Saints, and to be made marueilous in all them that beleeue.* 2 Thes. 1. 10. There is to bee looked for, the perfection of their glory,

glory, especially when the bodies of true beleeuers shall come to be glorified with their soules; for so saith the Apostle, *He shall change our vile body, and make it like his glorious body*, and then their bodies and soules ioyned together, and glorified together, must needs inioy the perfection of their happinesse and glory; and for the hastening of the consummation thereof, the Saints vnder the Altar cry, *How long Lord*, as indeed expecting and longing for the full fruition of that glory. Phil. 3. 21. Reu. 6. 10.

This happinesse & glory what it is, if we had the tongues of men and Angels, wee are not able to expresse it; the Apostle tearmes it *A most excellent, and an eternall weight of glory, when hee shall appeare, we shall be like vnto him*, (saith Saint *Iohn*.) The Church is compared to a *Bride*, and the Lord 2 Cor. 4. 17. 1 Ioh. 3. 2.

Reu. 19. 8. Iesus Christ to the *Bridegroome*; now what can be imagined here, that can yeeld more ioy and contentment, then a marriage day, when the married couple enioy the sweet content in the fruition of each other. Thus are true beleeuers decked and trimmed with the white robes of Christs righteousnesse, as a *Bride*, suteable and fit for so pure and glorious a *Bridegroome*.

Vse 1. This lets vs see then in the first place, the great aduantage that comes vnto euery true beleeuer by death; here they sow in teares, there they reape in ioy; they liue here in this world, as in a tempestuous sea, there they lye at anchor and rest, as in a Hauen. Now is their time of seruitude & bondage, then is their yeere of iubile. Here are they exercised continually with sorrowes, feares, cares, vnfet-

tings

setings within, and fightings without. There they shall rest from their labours, and enter into the ioy of their Lord, there to inioy him, in whose presence is the fulnesse of ioy, and at whose right hand there is pleasure for euermore, such as the Apostle saith, *The eye hath not seene, the eare hath not heard, &c.* We haue in our times seene many glorious sights, our eares haue heard of greater, but our hearts are so large, that they many times conceiue great things indeed, and yet the happinesse of the Saints in heauen, surpasseth them all. And therefore what wonderfull thing thou seest at any time, say that this is not it, for *the eye hath not seene it*, what wonderfull thing thou hast heard of, say this is not it, for *the eare hath not heard.* Yea, whatsoeuer thou art able to comprehend in

1 Cor. 2.9.

thy heart, say that it is not it, for *the heart is not able to conceiue.*

Now what greater happinesse can betide any of Gods seruants, then to be raised vp to such a state of glory, *as neither eye hath seene, eare hath heard, &c.* When the Queene of the South beheld the glory of *Salomon*, his attendants, the order of his house, diet, seruants, and the like, she concludeth thus, *Happy are thy men, and happy are these thy seruants that stand before thee alwayes, &c.* Did shee pronounce such to be happy, that stood continually before *Salomon*, and heard his wisedome? O how great then shall be their happinesse that shall come to behold the blessed Trinitie, Father, Sonne, and holy Ghost; what ioy will bee there, when we shall see those ten thousands praise the Lord day and night? And if *Peter*, *Iames*, and

2 Reg. 10: 18:

and *Iohn*, vpon Mount Tabor, were so rauished, as that they desired to pitch their Tabernacles there: O what raptures and ioyes may the godly expect, when they shall see and enioy the Lord Iesus Christ their beloued Bridegroom; not vpon Mount Tabor, but vpon Mount Sion, not to be separated suddenly asunder, as the Disciples were there, but to enioy the full fruition of Christ for euermore! This is called *the third heauen, the Bridegroomes Chamber*, an euerlasting habitation, lightened with the glory of the Lambe. The company there, Saints and Angels, the time of their abode, for euer and euer.

2 Cor. 12.2
Mat. 25.
Reu. 19.5.
Reu. 21.23.

Furthermore, these things doe manifest the happinesse of the soules & bodies of the Sts there.

The happinesse of the soules of the Saints after this life.

First, whereas here in this life we cannot but prouoke the Lord daily

daily by our sinnes, the very consideration whereof is a dagger to the hearts of Gods people, and makes them to cry out with the Apostle, and to say, *O wretched man that I am, who shall deliuer me from this body of sinne?* there they shall cease to sinne, and shall bee wholly ioyned to the Lord in truth and righteousnesse neuer to displease him any more.

2 Secondly, all the imperfections of the soule shall bee done away, and our knowledge shall be perfect, all ignorance shall bee done away, infidelity, distrust, &c

3 Thirdly, wee shall not nede there the Word, Sacraments, prayer, &c.

And for our bodies at that day, they shall likewise bee freed from sinne, from corruption and from all the miseries and infirmities that cleaue vnto them here, *And bee made*

made like vnto his glorious body. Phil. 3. 21.

O how may this affect our hearts with a longing desire of that time, when we shall thus see the face of God in glory, it should moue vs to long for that time, when this *glory shall be reuealed.* Surely, if wee looke for a part in this kingdome of heauen, wherin is all perfection of happinesse, wee cannot but desire the comming of the same, and to cry and say with the Church, *Come Lord Iesus, come quickly.* Rom. 8. Reu. 22. 20.

Vse 2.

This day

Here wee haue the fift and last circumstance in this Text at first propounded, and that is the time when this promise shall bee fulfilled, *This day. Verily this day thou, &c. q. d.* what though thy misery be great, and torment grieuous, that thou suffereſt, yet thy time is but short, thy deliuerance is at hand,

Text.

5. Time when.

hand, *verily this day, &c.*

Where wee may note first of all, the Lords bountifull liberality towards his seruants that seeke vnto him in time of misery. This Penitent desireth onely to be remembred of Christ, when hee should come into his kingdome, but Christ promiseth more, *This day shalt thou be with me.*

Doct. 1. God many times giues more then his seruants aske.

God giues more many times vnto his children, then they either aske or thinke; hee is many times larger in giuing, then they in desiring. It was but to be remembred when Christ came into his kingdome, that the Penitent requireth, Christ promiseth him not onely to be remembred, but also to bee with him, to bee with him this day, to bee with him this day in Paradice. God is vsually more liberall in giuing, then his seruants in desiring. *Iacob* desires onely

Gen. 32. 9. 10.

food

food and rayment at Gods hands, but God giues him more, as *Iacob* himself confesseth: God gaue him two bands, and abundance of goods, and cattell besides. *Salomon* desires onely an vnderstanding heart at Gods hand to gouerne his people, God giues him not onely wisedome according to his desire, but abundance of wealth besides. *Hannah* intreates the Lord to take from her the curse of barrennesse, and to giue her a sonne, the Lord granted her more then she desired, he gaue her many sonnes afterwards.

1 Reg. 3. 9. 13.

1 Sam. 2. 8.

How many came to our Sauiour in the dayes of his flesh, some sicke of one disease, and some of another, desiring help, whom our Sauiour did not only make whole of their infirmities, but also pronounced that their sinnes were forgiuen them. *Zacheus* came onely

Luke 19.

onely but to see Christ, and hee obtaines not onely the thing hee desired, in getting a full sight of Christ, but he hath this honour, to talke with Christ, to inuite him to his house, yea more then all this, to haue his soule euerlastingly saued by Christ.

Reas. Neither is this a thing to bee wondred at, for such is the Lords bounty and goodnesse towards his seruants, taking pleasure in their prosperity. And hence it is that the Apostle writing to the Ephesians, saith that *he is rich in grace*, a most bountifull master, making the cup of his seruants to ouerflow, and is therefore called the *Father of mercy*, and *God of all consolation*.

Eph. 1.7. Psal. 23.

2 Cor. 1.

Vse 1. Seeing then that God is so liberal a master, giuing many times vnto his seruants, more then they aske or seeke, this may be an excellent motiue

motiue with vs, to bring christianitie into request, inasmuch as we serue such a bountifull master. Seruants commonly inquire after such masters, and will desire to liue in such places, where they shall bee bountifully rewarded. This we are sure of, that the Lords seruants shall bee bountifully rewarded with him, he is euer better then his word vnto his people. Why are we then so backward in our suits vnto him? Are we in misery and distresse? *As a father pitieth his children, so hath the Lord compassion on them that feare him.* O but I am vnworthy of mercy: God giues mercy, not for our merit, but it is his free gift. O but I am a great sinner, and prouoke him daily? *Hee remembreth whereof wee are made, hee considereth that wee are but dust.* He hath said it, and he will doe it.

Hee

Psal. 145. 18. *He will fulfill the desires of them that feare him, hee also will heare their cry, and will helpe them.*

2 Secondly, seeing we are to deale with so liberall a Lord, that giues vnto his seruants more then they desire: hence ariseth our comfort and incouragement in prayer, to flye vnto him in al times of misery and distresse, for so hath the Lord said, *Call vpon me in the time of thy trouble, and I will heare thee and deliuer thee.* Doe wicked men persecute vs? doth Sathan continually solicite vs? doe our corruptions preuaile with vs? doe the thoughts of death and of the graue affright vs? yet still we haue the bosome of a louing Father to flye vnto. Behold this Penitent now at this time, astonished no doubt at the sight of death, and thoughts of his account hee is to make before the great tribunall.

Psal. 50. 15.

O happy he that could now flye into the bosome of his Sauiour, as the Doue to the Arke, that elsewhere could finde no rest. Now may hee sing that sweet *Requiem* vnto his soule, *Returne vnto thy rest O my soule, for the Lord hath rewarded thee.* We shall not need to feare any excesse in faith, as if wee could beleeue more then the Lord would, or could do vnto vs; for his grace is euer more plentifull then our petitions, hee giueth more then we aske, hauing his hand ready to giue, before we can get our mouthes open to desire.

This day.

As Christ is pleased to answer his seruant, and to grant him the thing hee prayeth for: So it is a thing remarkable, to consider in the circumstance of time, the speedie performance of the Lords

promise, *This day*. q.d. thou shalt not onely be remembred of mee, which is the thing thou desirest, but thou shalt euen this present day haue an end put vnto thy miserie, and thy *soule* receiued into glory. Note hence,

Doct. 2. A man may be in miserie and ioy in an houre.

That a man may be in miserie and ioy in an houre. Though the afflictions of Gods seruants are many times sharpe and grieuous, yet the Lord makes them many times but short and of small continuance. *Heauinesse may endure for a night, but ioy commeth in the morning.* The miseries of the righteous are neither durable nor incurable. *In the multitude of the sorrows of my heart* (saith *Dauid*) *Thy comforts haue refreshed my soule.* The Lord doth aswell foresee their arriuall, as their launcing foreth; and the end of their troubles, as the beginning of the same.

Psal. 94.

Many

Many are the troubles of the righteous, but the Lord deliuereth them out of all. And indeed, Pſal. 34. 19

If the Lord ſhould not deale thus with his ſeruants, they would haue their hearts ouerwhelmed with ſorrow, and themſelues faint and ſinke vnder the burthen of their ſufferings. Now it is his gracious will, not to *breake the bruſed reed, nor quench the ſmoaking flaxe.* Reaſ. 1.

Secondly, the end of all afflictions and miſeries that betide the godly here, is but to humble them, and bring them nearer vnto God. Now when any affliction ſent hath wrought this effect, God preſently remoues the affliction, as a wound when it is whole the plaſter falls off. 2

Thirdly, life it ſelfe is not long, but ſhort, and of ſmall continuance. Now miſeries cannot bee 3.

long where life is so short.

Vse. This serues then to teach vs in all our miseries still to waite on God, with this *Penitent* hire; for, as *Mordecai* said to *Hester*, *Deliuerance will come.* There is nothing more sure and certaine, then the deliuerance of Gods people out of miserie. As God makes prouision for his children of correction as of food, and not at sometime to taste of correction, is a signe rather of a Bastard then of a Sonne: So will the Lord see to them, that they shall not want a seasonable deliuerance.

Let no man then say in time of prosperitie, *I shall neuer be moued.* Psal. 30. 6. Neither let any say in times of aduersitie, *I shall neuer be restored.* For God can turne thy night into day, thy heauinesse into ioy, and thy mourning into gladnesse, and all in a moment of time. Oh but thou

thou haſt laine long among the pots, and thou haſt often ſought the Lord. What then? By ſo much the more precious will deliuerance bee, and thou fitted to praiſe his name, when the Lord ſhall deliuer thee.

This day.

The laſt Inſtruction we are to obſerue hence is, That they that ſhew mercy in an euill day, ſhall themſelues find mercy in the euill day.

Doct. 3. Such as haue ſhewed mercy in an euill day, ſhall find mercy in the euill day.

Chriſt being now to ſuffer, and lying vnder many reproaches: This poore *Penitent* pitieth Chriſt in his miſerie, pleades his cauſe, and cleareth his innocency, *This man* (ſaith he) *hath done nothing amiſſe.* And now Chriſt ſhewes mercy to him, in time of his greateſt need. The *Penitent* pitied Chriſt, and commiſerates his miſery being an innocent.

Christ pitieth the Penitent in time of his misery, and receiueth him to mercy. That which our Sauiour had formerly taught his disciples, *Blessed are the mercifull, for they shall obtaine mercy:* hee maketh good to this poore *Penitent.* His mercy to Christ, is recompensed with mercy from Christ. *Onesiphorus*, that good man, shewed mercy to *Paul*, *Hee often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chaine: but when he was in Rome, he sought me diligently, and found me.* What then? *The Lord grant vnto him that he may finde mercy of the Lord in that day.*

Mat. 3. 7.

2. Tim. 1. 16.

Verse 18.

An excellent example whereof we haue in *Ebedmelech*, who vnderstanding that *Ieremy* was in prison, and there ready to perish for hunger: He pleades his cause vnto the King, and procures his deliuerie. The Lord remembred

Ier. 38. 9.

this

this kindnes of *Ebedmelech*, *I will deliuer thee in that day, saith the Lord. Rahab* shewed mercy to the Lords seruants when they searched the land of *Canaan*, hid the *spies*, and preserued their liues. This kindnesse of hers is requited with the safetie of her owne life. Ier.39.17. Iol.6.17.

The *Shunamite* that was so kinde vnto *Elisha*, making such prouision for him in his trauaile, loseth nothing by it in the end; her mercy to him, is recompensed with mercy to her and hers. 1 King 17. 10.

And Christ shewes how hee will proceed in iudgement at the last day, with wicked men, *I was hungry*, &c. Mat. 25.

And the reason hereof is, Because mercy to such as are in miserie, is an excellent fruit of faith; and such as God hath promised to crowne, and to reward at last. *Reas.* 1.

Secondly, it kindleth the affe- 2

ctions of those that haue beene relieued, to pray vnto God for such, as haue beene such instruments of their comfort; and to praise God for them; by which meanes the Lord is moued to shew mercy.

Vse. This teacheth all Gods people to lay hold vpon all opportunities that shall bee offered vnto them, of doing good vnto others, especially to such as are in misery. It was *Iobs* comfort, that *The bowels of the hungry did blesse him.* Pitie the distressed in their need, and the Lord will pitie thee in thy greatest need. Do wee not desire mercy in the houre of death, and in the day of iudgement? The way to finde mercie then, is to shew mercy now; otherwise, *There shall be Iudgement mercilesse to him that will shew no mercy.* Iam. 2.13.

FINIS.

A Short view of such Doctrines as are enlarged with their Reasons and Vses, in this Booke.

Doctrines. Page.

He malice of the wicked great against Christ, and his members. 6

Good men many times suffer as malefactours. 23

Christ died an accursed death. 18

Not the punishment but the cause maketh a Martyr. 32

Sinne and shame go together. 41

Afflictions make the wicked worse. 51.

When

Doctrines:	Pag:
When the wicked begin once to fall from God, they have no stay of themselues.	59
A sinfull life, hath commonly attending it a cursed and miserable death.	71
None more subiect vnto disgrace, then the godly are.	93
It is a great sinne to adde affliction to the afflicted.	103
God brings his children often to a low ebbe in this life.	113
Infidelitie a dangerous sinne.	115
Euill examples dangerous.	124
Properties of a wicked man to be giuen to mocking.	132
God can make of great sinners great Saints.	143
All men are alike by Nature, vntill God make a difference by grace.	153
Afflictions of excellent vse to bring men to God.	164

To

Doctrines. Pag.

To cease from euill is not sufficient, we must do good. 172

He that rebuketh another, must not be guilty of the same fault himselfe. 183

A true note of a true Conuert to stop others in a course of sin. 191

A true Conuert desires that others may partake of the same grace 216

The afflictions of the godly reach vnto Christ. 233

The want of the feare of God the cause of all sinne. 237

Afflictions that summon to death, should cause a man to looke home. 250

Vnto true repentance, confession of sinne necessary. 257

Godly submit themselues to Gods seuerest corrections without repining. 285

A true Christian must at all times

Doctrines.	Page.
times stand for Christ.	298
In all ages God hath had some witnesses of his truth.	310
True grace is known by the daily growth in grace.	322
None can pray effectually, but the Penitent.	334
Christ a Lord.	349
Christ a King.	356
True faith raiseth vp a man aboue this life.	365
In prayer wee must see God all-sufficient in those things wee seeke of him.	372
The saluation of the soule is principally to be desired.	381
The happinesse of a Christian not to be looked for here, but hereafter.	401
Release from temporall afflictions doth not alwayes follow true repentance.	407
It is a wonderfull hard thing truly	

Doctrines.	Page
truly to beleeue.	416
There is an vnchangeable certainty in all Gods promises.	431
Godly must labour to be perswaded of Gods loue.	443
Prayers of the godly very effectuall.	457
The sinnes of the Penitent cannot hinder their saluation.	471
They that in misery waite vpon God, shall not misse of comfort in the end.	482
The soules of the faithfull in death are gathered vnto Christ.	489
In heauen is the perfection of all happinesse.	498
God many times giues more then his seruants aske.	506
A man may be in miserie and ioy in an houre.	512
Such as shew mercy in an euill day shall not misse of mercy in the euill day.	515